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ABSTRACT

The linguistic purposes of this research were to focus on content, themes and topics, and to analyze the way the target language (English) was used in e-mail. Communicativeness and the roles of the communicator (writer-reader) became central, emphasizing the multidirectional character of e-mail communication. The basic tenet of communicativeness and a naturalistic communicative learning environment in classrooms was connected to the question of the degree of initiative and free negotiable topic choice. The research problems included issues concerning content (themes and topics) and language used in e-mail communication. Research methodology was an ethnographic approach complemented by a thematic and linguistic analysis on content and language. The Finnish participants consisted of six classes in three senior secondary schools with four teachers of English. The foreign participants consisted of schools in Britain and the United States with further contacts in Austria, Canada, Germany, Iceland, Japan, and Sweden. Data were gathered during fieldwork (November 1989-May 1990). Results of the study indicated that process-led collaborative e-mail communication encouraged writing and exchanging ideas across the world; a collaborative effort made writing more public, bringing social and negotiation skills into focus; modes of writing became more versatile; e-mail formed a new repository of teaching and learning materials; e-mail written on-line resembled oral communication while off-line writing showed more textual and linguistic coherence and organization; phatic use of language was essential to the functionality of the communication channel; and artistic, emotive, and poetic language was widely used as well as referential or informative use of the target language. Twenty-one of the 98 references are in English. An abstract in Finnish is also provided. (Author/ALF)



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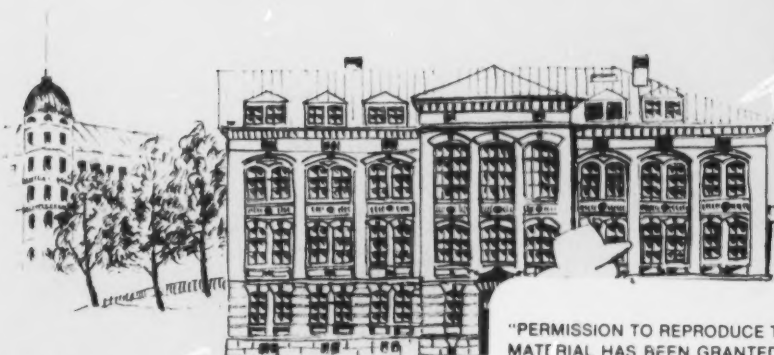
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RESEARCH REPORT 99

Department of Teacher Education
University of Helsinki

Seppo Tella

TALKING SHOP VIA E-MAIL: A THEMATIC AND LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF ELECTRONIC MAIL COMMUNICATION



Helsinki 1992

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RESEARCH REPORT 99

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Seppo Tella

**TALKING SHOP VIA E-MAIL:
A THEMATIC AND LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS
OF ELECTRONIC MAIL COMMUNICATION**

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Seppo Tella

Talking Shop Via E-Mail: A Thematic and Linguistic Analysis
of Electronic Mail Communication (249 + 43 pages)

Abstract

The linguistic purposes were (i) to focus on contents (themes and topics), and (ii) to analyse the way the target language (English) was used in e-mails.

Communicativeness and the roles of the communicator (writer-reader) became central, emphasising the multidirectional character of e-mail communication. The basic tenet of communicativeness and a naturalistic communicative learning environment in classrooms was connected to the question of the degree of initiative and free negotiable topic choice.

The research method was based on an ethnographic approach complemented by a thematic and linguistic analysis on contents and language.

The research problems included issues concerning content (themes and topics) and language used in e-mail communication. The Finnish participants consisted of six classes (Form 1 or 2) in three senior secondary schools, with four teachers of English (mother tongue: Finnish). The foreign participants consisted of schools in Britain and the USA (with further contacts in Austria, Canada, the former Federal Republic of Germany, the former German Democratic Republic, Iceland, Japan, and Sweden). Data was gathered during fieldwork (November 1989–May 1990).

New contents and focuses on methods of work were achieved. Process-led collaborative e-mail communication encouraged writing and exchanging ideas across the world in open-ended linguistic situations in an information-rich learning environment. A collaborative effort made writing more public, drawing social and negotiation skills into focus. The modes of writing also became more versatile. From students' viewpoint, negotiable topic choice was in harmony with the official curriculum. E-mails formed a new repository of teaching and learning materials.

E-mails written on-line resembled oral communication (elliptical language, colloquialisms, casual style, focus on cohesion). Non-verbal communication was replaced by textual visualisations. Off-line writings showed more textual and linguistic coherence and were more hierarchically organised wholes. Phatic use of language (contact establishing and supporting) was essential to the functionality of the communication channel. Artistic, emotive, and poetic language was widely used besides referential or informative use of the target language.

Keywords: Electronic mail, Communications Networks, Computer-Mediated Communication, Computer-Assisted Language Learning, Foreign Language Teaching, Written Text Production, Senior Secondary School

Seppo Tella

Talking Shop Via E-Mail: A Thematic and Linguistic Analysis
of Electronic Mail Communication

(Puhutaanpa asiasta sähköpostissa: Temaattis-kielellinen analyysi
sähköpostiviestinnästä) (249 + 43 sivua)

Tiivistelmä

Kielellisenä tavoitteena oli sähköpostiviestinnän sisällöllinen ja tavoitekielen (englannin) lingvistinen analyysi. Keskeisiksi muodostuivat kommunikatiivisuus ja viestijän roolit (kirjoittaja-lukija) sekä sähköpostiviestinnän multidirektionaalisuus. Perusprinsiippi kommunikatiivisuudesta ja naturalistisen viestintä- ja oppimisympäristöstä yhdistyi kysymykseen aloitteellisuudesta ja vapaasta, yhdessä sovittavasta aihevalinnasta.

Tutkimusmenetelmä pohjautui etnografiseen lähestymistapaan, jota täydensi temaattis-lingvistinen sisällön ja kielen analyysi.

Tutkimusongelmat liittyivät sisältöihin ja sähköpostiviestinnässä käytettyyn kieleen. Suomessa tutkimukseen osallistui kolmen lukion neljän englanninopettajan (äidinkieli: suomi) kuusi 1. tai 2. luokkaa. Ulkomaisia kouluja tutkimukseen osallistui Britannia ja Yhdysvalloista. Lisäkonakteja oli Itävaltasta, Kanadasta, ent. DDR:stä, ent. Saksan liittotasavalasta, Islannista, Japanista ja Ruotsista. Analysoitu data kerättiin kenttätutkimuksen aikana (marraskuusta 1989 toukokuuhun 1990).

Tutkimus toi esiin uusia sisältöjä ja työtapojen painotuksia. Prosessinomainen yhteistoiminnallinen sähköpostiviestintä kannusti kirjoittamaan ja vaihtamaan ajatuksia koko maailman kanssa avoimissa kielenkäyttötilanteissa informaatorikkaassa oppimisympäristössä. Yhteistoiminnallisuus teki kirjoittamisesta julkisemman ja nosti sosiaalisia ja neuvottelutaitoja etusijalle. Kirjoittamistyyli monipuolistuivat. Oppilaiden kannalta vapaa aihevalinta oli sopusoinnussa virallisen opetussuunnitelman kanssa. Sähköviesteistä tuli uudenlaista opetus- ja opiskelumateriaalia.

Suoraan näyttöön kirjoitetut sähköpostiviestit muistuttivat suullista viestintää (elliptistä, puhekielenomaista, informaalia tyyliä, päähuomio koheesiossa). Sanattoman viestinnän puutetta korvasi tekstivisualisointi. Teksturilla ensin kirjoitetut viestit olivat tekstuaalis-lingvistisesti koherentimpia ja hierarkkisemmin jäsenytyneitä kokonaisuuksia. Kontaktia ylläpitävä faattinen kielenkäyttö osoittautui viestintäkanavan funktionaalisuuden kannalta olennaiseksi. Referentiaalisen tai informatiivisen tavoitekielen käytön lisäksi esiintyi runsaasti artistis-emotionaalista ja poeettista kielenkäyttöä.

Avainsanat: sähköposti, viestintäverkot, tietokonevälitteinen viestintä, tietokoneavusteinen kielenopetus, vieraskielen opetus, kirjoittaminen, lukio

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The present report is the second part of a research project, initiated in 1989, on foreign language (FL) education and some pedagogical applications of Information Technologies (IT). It forms a continuation to the first part (Tella 1991).

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*Helsinki,
January 10th, 1992.*

Seppo Tella

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1. Introduction

1.1. General

During the last few years, the use of various telecommunications systems, such as international communications networks and electronic mail (e-mail), has been widely generalised in a variety of fields of life, also in the educational sector. This has been closely associated with the ever increasing use of personal computers. It has been facilitated by the appearance of new, more user-friendly software, which have lowered the possible obstacles and barriers set up by an awkward man/machine interface.

This kind of technical progress may also have epistemological implications, dealing with the character and boundaries of knowledge, as it is closely linked to the changing concept of knowledge. New kinds of telemedia, multimedia, and, lately, hypermedia, combining moving video, audio and text, have contributed to the genesis of a developing concept of knowledge, more dynamic and transient than the older transfer-type idea of knowledge (cf. e.g., Lehtinen & al. 1989; Lehtinen 1990; Leino 1989; Olson & Atkins 1990; Rice & Shook 1990; Voutilainen, Mehtäläinen & Niiniluoto 1990; Välijärvi 1990). Computers are powerful tools to store, transmit, present, retrieve, and sort large amounts of information in a non-linear way. They do not simply transfer structured information but facilitate its restructuring in various kinds of problem-solving situations. Now that computers have been linked to global communications networks, a powerful infrastructure has been created, giving access to innumerable amounts of information. In fact, technology and the organisation and transfer of information are becoming increasingly synonymous (Komoski 1987, 22). Another consideration is that different users can access the kind of information they find useful more easily than previously. Educationally, it is desirable that it will also encourage students to question the information and the "facts" they access.

In education, these new media have properly been considered useful tools, not devices, in hands of teachers, students, and researchers. They have also been put to use in school administration. It seems reasonable to assume that the speed of this technological development is not slowing down in the years to come; on the contrary, new developments appear to be launched on the markets one after another. It is up to the educational sector to ponder upon whether these developments can be used for pedagogically and didactically suitable and desirable purposes. If this is done, it natu-

rally calls for a lot of research and development work, to which the present study also belongs. These tools are usually invented for general or all-round purposes, to be used in business and professional life, thus they are not designed to be employed in school settings. However, they can act as powerful and effective links between schools and the surrounding society. They seem to constitute new tools which the schools cannot afford to do without. Various researchers and even regular teachers have also realised that pedagogical applications of Information Technologies can stimulate and renovate the teaching/learning process (cf. e.g., Kay 1991; Koppinen & Pasanen 1991; Linnakylä, Sajavaara & Takala 1991).

1.2. Purpose of the Study

This report is the second part of a research project, started in 1989, on foreign language (FL) education and some pedagogical applications of Information Technologies (IT). The first part (Tella 1991) concentrated on reporting how an open, multimedia-based learning environment was created by establishing international electronic links between several Finnish and foreign schools at various levels (teachers, students, researcher) and how a technological innovation (international communications networks and electronic mail) was introduced into and adapted for the teaching of English as a foreign language in Finnish senior secondary schools.

The general purpose of this report is to continue to explicate the implications of the innovation/adoption process started in the fieldwork period of the research project. Another purpose is to continue analysing the character of computer-mediated communication on international communications networks and the use of electronic mail in the teaching of English as students' first foreign language in some Finnish senior secondary schools.

The first specific linguistic purpose of this report is to focus on contents, themes, and topics. They will also be analysed *vis-à-vis* the current foreign language curriculum implemented in Finnish senior secondary schools. The second linguistic purpose is to analyse the way the target language is used in e-mail communication on international communications networks.

The scientific problem of the first part of the research project (Tella 1991, 2) was built on two premisses: communicativeness as a general objective in foreign language teaching and communications networks contributing to communicativeness in foreign language classrooms. At the operational level this paved the way for intro-

ducing international communications networks as a technological innovation into foreign language classrooms. The basic premisses (Tella 1991, 7) are equally important in this report. However, the concept of communicativeness, referring more closely to readiness and willingness to exchange information, becomes more prominent in the present report. As far as contents (themes and topics) are concerned, the role of the communicator becomes central. The various roles of the communicator—especially that of a writer and a reader, a sender and a recipient—complement each other. In computer-mediated communication, the language user has to adopt all of these roles. This emphasises the multidirectional character of e-mail communication, when compared to more traditional ways of dealing with language materials. Another aspect is to what extent the communicator is allowed or even encouraged to come up with new topics, outside the official curriculum. In other words, the basic tenet of communicativeness and naturalistic communicative learning environment in classrooms is connected to the question of the degree of initiative and free negotiable topic choice. Although students in Finnish senior secondary schools are fairly used to planning instruction together with the teacher, autonomy in learning can further be stressed by consciously encouraging their higher level models of working. The use of an international communications network is in harmony with this aim.

Briefly, in the first report of this research project, introducing the use of international communications networks and electronic mail comprised the technological innovation which the participating teachers and their students were unfamiliar with. It is important to notice that Information Technology as such, e.g., the use of microcomputers and word-processors, was not regarded as a technological innovation. In this report, the adoption of this innovation is regarded as a *fait accompli*; it will not necessarily be referred to later, unless some new aspects will be taken up to illustrate the main foci of this report.

The third part of the research project, dealing with the Finnish students' position *vis-à-vis* their teachers and the researcher, and the issue of gender sensitivity, will be reported later (Tella 1992).

2. Foreign Language Methodology

2.1. Approach, Design, and Procedure

The way English as students' first foreign language is taught in Finnish senior secondary schools forms a methodological background, to which computer-mediated communication and e-mail communication have to be compared. It is, however, not possible to speak of *one* teaching method being used in Finnish senior secondary schools; instead, several methods are used, and, more important, variations and combinations of different methods occur. Therefore it is more appropriate to speak of a FL methodology, which deliberately albeit somewhat eclectically utilises features of several individual methods. Even the same teacher might use a different approach in different classes and when implementing different teaching materials. Besides, it is not easy to define what a method is without first analysing the concept itself. In this study, Richards & Rodgers' three-part framework (1982) will be used as a starting point in order to see how computer-mediated communication can be built into a methodological framework. It will be, however, outside the scope of this study to go into detail concerning various teaching methods. What is aimed at is to focus on different aspects of methods and compare them with the main components of the present study, in comparison with communications networks and computer-mediated communication in particular.

Richards & Rodgers (1982; see also Richards & Rodgers 1986) define a method in terms of three levels: *approach*, *design*, and *procedure*.

"Approach is a theory of language and of language learning. Design is a definition of linguistic content, a specification for the selection and organization of content, and a description of the role of teacher, learner, and teaching materials. Procedure is concerned with techniques and practices in a method." (Richards & Rodgers 1982, 153)

Although it is not generally accepted to have the term 'method' as an umbrella term for the 'approach', I find Richards & Rodgers' (1982) definition an appropriate one, as it calls for several criteria before a method can be specified. Basically, their definition is against excessive use of the term 'method', perhaps abused when speaking of simple teaching practices and working activities.

According to Richards & Rodgers (1982), the three concepts, forming an interdependent system, interrelate various elements of organisation on which language teaching practices are founded.

"[A]pproach, defines those assumptions, beliefs, and theories about the nature of language and the nature of language learning which operate as axiomatic constructs or reference points and provide a theoretical foundation for what language teachers ultimately do with learners in classrooms. ...[D]esign ... specifies the relationship of theories of language and learning to both the form and function of instructional materials and activities in instructional settings. [P]rocedure ... comprises the classroom techniques and practices which are consequences of particular approaches and designs." (Richards & Rodgers 1982, 154)

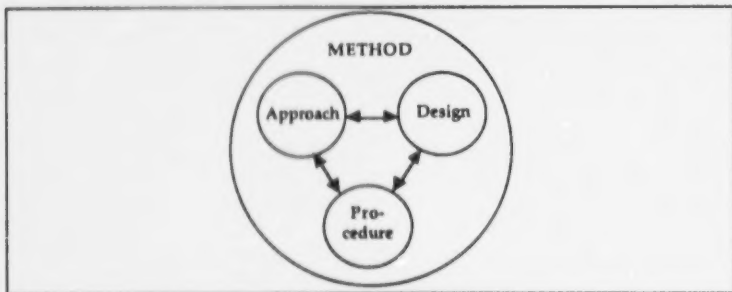


Figure 1. The three-level definition of a method (Richards & Rodgers 1982, 155).

Richards & Rodgers (1982, 154–155) maintain that new methodologies can develop out of any of the three components and in various directions (clockwise, counterclockwise, or both), e.g., from procedure to approach. In this sense, the system is open to various developments. Richards & Rodgers' definition (1982) is a good starting-point when communications networks and e-mail are introduced into the teaching of a foreign language. It gives ample scope to analyse what sort of things are changed in the teaching/learning process and whether they actually have an influence on the whole. Neither computer-mediated communication nor e-mail communication can be called a FL method as such; rather, they belong to procedures or classroom practices¹. On the other hand, they implicitly presuppose a certain kind of approach the teacher has to accept or implement in order to use e-mail in FL teaching. E-mail can be taken to be in harmony with approaches that focus on

¹ In this sense, they resemble 'methods of work', i.e., different types of activity, types of practice, and other classroom techniques that help to structure practice work in classrooms.

principles supported by a communicative methodology. As to design, e-mails, based on textual material, can replace some of the other teaching/learning materials. In this sense, the approach adopted by the teacher leads to designs which facilitate or lead to using e-mail communication in FL classrooms. The three components form a whole, which emphasises an open multimedia-based learning environment.

Earlier, I argued for tri-literacy as an index of an information society on one hand (Tella 1991, 16), and for a communicative proficiency on the other. This was based on a conclusion that a communicative proficiency, i.e., the fact of being communicatively proficient, skilled or an expert, can be thought of as having various levels, while communicative competence, the fact of being communicatively competent or able, i.e., having ability, power or authority, skill or knowledge to do what is called for, though naturally a needed potential for performance, may turn out bipolar, either one has or has not competence to communicate.

The viewpoint of an information society is included in Jamissen & Nyhus' (1986) interpretation of communicative competence as a necessary qualification in an information society (*en nødvendig basiskvalifikasjon i informasjonssamfunnet*). Basing their view of this concept on Frønes (1985), they divide it into three parts: social communication and social situations (*sosial kommunikasjon og sosiale situasjoner*), which include i.a. different forms of team and project work in private and public life; second, communication in a societal context (*samfunnsmessige kommunikasjon*), to which media belong, and their form as well as symbol language, and third, political and socially critical reflection (*politisk og samfunnsmessig kritisk refleksjon*). (Jamissen & Nyhus 1986, 80) Even if this kind of division differs somewhat from other classifications of communication, it is quite relevant in this study, since it emphasises interpersonal communication in its various forms as well as the significance of media and the importance of their form and the language they use.

The main objective of foreign language learning and teaching can be defined to consist of a good communicative proficiency (cf. e.g., Tella 1991, 6). While still underlining the use of object and discourse languages (cf. Hellgren 1982, 44), this viewpoint implicitly emphasises the communication strategies even somewhat more (cf. e.g., Bardovi-Harlig & al. 1991; Bongaerts & Poulisse 1989; Byrnes 1987; Dörnyei & Thurrell 1991; Ellis 1990; Færch & Kasper 1983; Horwitz 1987; Kellerman, Bongaerts & Poulisse 1987; Marton 1988). The use of international communications networks and e-

mail provide the students and their teachers with a naturalistic language context with a variety of linguistic situations, functions, and notions, in which the need for the use of various communication strategies tends to grow.

2.2. Contents of Foreign Language Teaching

In Finnish senior secondary schools, teaching guidelines and main teaching contents have been based on the nationwide curriculum¹ set up by the National Board of General Education. They have been implemented and can be complemented by the municipalities and the schools themselves. The present document (Anon. 1985) includes the nationwide curricula of all the subjects taught, including English as students' first foreign language (Language A). This document has been complemented by several methodological booklets (e.g., Anon. 1981; Anon. 1987). These documents have given more freedom to schools and more emphasis to municipal level decision making, and this trend still seems to strengthen in the Finnish educational context. In the following, the present curriculum (Anon. 1985) will be paid closest attention to, as foreign language teaching in senior secondary schools is expected to follow the guidelines of this document, although, as stated above, administratively, it has been complemented by municipal level curricula.

According to the official FL curriculum, the communication situations consist of six categories: personal level contacts; hobbies; everyday services; professional life; formal and official language situations; information retrieval and transfer. The language situations studied in Form 1 ought to be fairly concrete and based on two-way (bidirectional) communication (conversations, correspondence, etc.), in Form 2 as well as in Form 3, based increasingly on

¹ In this research report, the term 'curriculum' will be used to refer to the Finnish language *opetussuunnitelma*. In fact, the Finnish FL curriculum, as curricula of other subjects too, partly resembles the German concept *Lehrplan*, partly the American concept 'curriculum', as it depicts educational and teaching objectives as well as contents while, at the same time, specifying the organisation of work at a given school level. In English, both 'curriculum' and 'syllabus' are used; the latter usually refers to the form in which linguistic content is specified in a course or method (Richards & Rodgers 1986, 21). In Finland, there is a growing tendency to speak more of 'curriculum development' than of 'curricula' themselves. It is, however, beyond the scope of this report to analyse the differences in great detail (for a more detailed analysis, see e.g., Carter 1991; Kansanen 1987; Kelly 1989; Malinen 1987; Sharpes 1988; Skilbeck 1990).

one-way (unidirectional) communication, like listening to recordings and reading texts. (Anon. 1985, 62)

The texts to be listened to or read should contain various uses of the target language, such as personal (dialogues, conversations), descriptive (descriptions of people, circumstances, hobbies, environments), narrative (stories, tales, events), expressive (opinions, attitudes, impressions, feelings), expository (articles, lectures), and English for special purposes (announcements, instructions, guidelines, catalogues). (Anon. 1985, 64)

English as students' first foreign language (Language A) in senior secondary schools consists of eight courses, each having thirty-eight 45-minute-long lessons. The three first courses (1. *Man and his neighbourhood*; 2. *Man, his hobbies and the services he uses*; 3. *Man and his work*) are studied in Form 1; the next three (4. *Man and society*; 5. *Man, knowledge, and technology*; 6. *Man, education, and culture*) in Form 2, and the last two courses (7. *Man and nature*; 8. *Man and peoples of the world*) in Form 3 in a period-based senior secondary school.

The courses are depicted in the nationwide curriculum (Anon. 1985) from several perspectives: point of view (perspective taking), emphasis (of the four language skills in each course), and learning contents (mainly themes and situations). In addition, a list of grammatical structures to be learned actively (production level) or to be recognised (receptive or comprehension level) is included in the curriculum (Anon. 1985, 73–82). *Appendix A* will give a brief summary of the learning contents of the eight courses.

2.3. Themes and Topics

By 'theme' is understood the subject of a talk or piece of writing; 'topic' is a subject for conversation, talk, writing, etc., or, in other words, a focus of information in the discourse. In the present study, these terms are regarded as near synonyms, though a theme can also be thought of as a long range topic, comprising a series of topics to be covered during the whole fieldwork period, for example. However, as van Lier points out (1986), the term 'topic' is often used somewhat differently, for instance to refer either to a unit of analysis or to part of the discourse process. In the former sense, then, 'topic' may be taken for a synonym for various parts of the lesson, e.g., the homework, a dialogue, pair work, a role play, etc. (van Lier 1986, 147). The way 'topic' will be interpreted in this report is much closer to van Lier's definition of it in a classroom eth-

nography: " (...) topic is therefore a sustained focusing, of attention, *through* [emphasis in the original] the talk and *across* [emphasis in the original] a stretch of talk, on some single issue or set of closely related issues" (van Lier 1986, 148). In this report, the emphasis is partly laid on written e-mail communication, partly on stretches of talk in the practical teaching situations in FL classrooms. The term 'topic', in my view, is relevant in both contexts.

In this report, the general framework of communicative purposes will be based on different levels of themes, starting from a universal or world-wide level, epitomised in the question "What themes and topics are generally discussed between (young) people in different countries?" The initial viewpoint is within Europe (Britain and Finland, in particular). Second, the level of specific groups of people, like teachers (adults) and students (teenagers or young adults) will be paid attention to, and third, the emphasis will be narrowed towards the Finnish senior secondary school level, with a focus on the official FL curriculum.

Themes, topics, and contents can be approached through various methods of work in classroom situations. The main focus in this report will be the communicative viewpoint; examples of methods of work are cited if they somehow relate to the way the authentic character of the theme is observed. On the whole, I would argue that themes are not activity-specific, even if, admittedly, the combination of themes and activities is of interest and useful from an analytic viewpoint. The teacher can approach a theme from various angles, have it discussed on a student-to-student basis or as a conversation piece for the whole class. Themes and topics are seen to represent the world of values which both learners and teachers consider valuable enough to be worth consideration. What counts is intrinsically the process of genesis concerning the themes and topics, i.e., how the choice of themes and topics is settled and agreed upon (whether it is an issue negotiated or negotiable together between or across the Finnish and foreign participants or whether it is launched as an unnegotiable issue to be caught and replied to or to be rejected by the recipients), how and to what extent and on whose terms (teachers', students' or researchers' terms) they are discussed, why they are abandoned or rejected, and for what reasons or purposes they are resumed. Van Lier sums these questions up in his term 'topic orientation' (1986, 148), related closely to the specification of topical coherence by Levinson (1983):

"(...) topical coherence is something *constructed* [emphasis in the original] *across* turns by the collaboration of participants. What needs then to be studied is how potential topics are introduced and collabo-

ratively ratified, how they are marked as 'new', 'touched off', 'mis-placed' and so on, how they are avoided or competed over and how they are collaboratively closed down." (Levinson 1983, 315)

Themes and topics are interrelated to the concept of contents. Van Lier (1986, 166) speaks of a cognitive context (part of lesson organisation), which stands for the selection of suitable subject matter and includes its logical breakdown into hierarchical or sequential components. This is usually done by the teacher exclusively, guided by the official curriculum. However, students seem to profit (i.e., they learn more and are more actively involved in the teaching/learning process) by having a choice of nominating and controlling the topic of the discourse (the so-called *topicalisation hypothesis*, cf. e.g., Ellis 1990, 123–124; Hidi & McLaren 1991, 188). Although this hypothesis originally referred to spoken discourse only, it can be generalised to include computer-mediated communication in that though one part of it is spoken discourse, the other is based on written work. Consequently it appears to be important that not all topics are nominated or determined exclusively by the teacher; rather, students should have ample opportunity to nominate topics of their own.

The official curriculum (Anon. 1985) emphasises the student's personality and its development as well as the requirements of culture and society regarding the choice of themes and topics. The themes chosen should interest the students and motivate them to study. Further, they are to support international understanding, but they should equally deal with Finnish society and culture so that the student would be capable of transmitting information of the living conditions in this country. Extra materials based on the students' interests and hobbies should be as authentic as possible. (Anon. 1985, 62–63)

2.4. Teaching Strategies

Computer-mediated communication (e-mail in particular) is directly linked to a variety of computer-mediated communication systems (cf. e.g., Tella 1991, 24–26). In order to develop a more general conceptual framework for the study of e-mailing, computer-mediated communication must also be identified in the context of different teaching strategies, to be viewed through foreign language teaching. Bosco & Di Pietro (1970) identified eleven distinctive features of the most common teaching strategies and divided them

into eight psychological and three linguistic features. Although the classification originally was meant to be used in analysing teaching methods, it looks useful for the purpose of identifying the nature of computer-mediated communication as well. The classifying features of the analysis will be presented first:

The eight psychological features:

- 1 *functional vs. non-functional*: if the learner is expected to produce sentences in the language in order to meet specific communication goals, then the strategy is functional. A non-functional strategy refers to giving information about the language or about its culture.
- 2 *central vs. non-central*: in the first instance, behaviour is anchored in cognitive and cortical processes; in the second, in the sensory and motor periphery. Strategies with a peripheral reference view learning as taking place by the automatic input of data from the outside.
- 3 *affective vs. non-affective*: an affective focus underlines motivational factors, emotional tone, value systems, and attitudes of acceptance or rejection.
- 4 *nomothetic vs. non-nomothetic*: a nomothetic approach brings language rules explicitly into focus.
- 5 *idiographic vs. non-idiographic*: idiographic strategies are concerned with expressive behaviour. An individual's unique style of expression is underscored. In non-idiographic strategies, the learner is treated more as a closed system.
- 6 *molar vs. non-molar (or molecular)*: a molar pattern emphasises the quality of wholeness while the non-molar view focuses upon the small, constituent (microscopic) elements resulting from reductional analysis.
- 7 *cyclic vs. non-cyclic*: the cyclic feature refers to the presentation of a point in a way leading to gradual familiarisation by returning to it at different intervals in the course of instruction. The student is not expected to 'overlearn' any point at the time of its first presentation. A non-cyclic approach stresses mastery of the point before moving on to another series of points.
- 8 *divergent vs. non-divergent*: in divergent strategies, specific language skills such as phonetic discrimination, listening comprehension, oral expression, reading comprehension, expository writing, etc. are isolated and treated carefully. In non-divergent strategies, an undifferentiated or global view of language is assumed.

The three linguistic features:

- 1 *general vs. non-general*: the presentation is called general, if the grammar is framed within a context drawn from elements external to the language being studied. Non-general or specific rules of

grammar, on the other hand, are those drawn from observations of a language's particular structure.

2 *systematic vs. non-systematic*: in a systematic grammatical presentation, matters of language structure are consistently and thoroughly covered according to some organisational scheme. Unsystematic strategies often mix stylistic with obligatory rules, writing with speech, or synchronism with diachronism.

3 *unified vs. non-unified*: the unified grammatical presentation keeps the learner aware of the underlying grammatical model, allowing him to integrate each new rule learned within a cohesive theory of the language.

(Bosco & Di Pietro 1970, 11–16)

The original classification is of interest but subject to criticism. Stern (1983), for instance, notes that some of the features overlap (e.g., *molar* = *systematic* = *unified*) and they are presented as if they were all equal. He further points out that some features refer to teaching techniques (features 2, 4, 6, and 8) while others refer to goals (e.g., features 1, 3, and 5), and others to course design (feature 7). Stern (1983, 488) is also doubtful about the process of intuitive interpretation which is behind the classification. On the other hand, this feature analysis helps to get a general picture of not only teaching methods but teaching practices as well, because it illustrates different facets of those practices in a rather systematic way, enlarging in this sense the definition of procedure by Richards & Rodgers (1982, 153).

The classification lends itself to criticism from other angles as well. From the point of view of computer-mediated communication, at least two new dimensions should be added to it, viz. *creative vs. repetitive*, and *autonomous vs. model-based*. It could be argued that these dimensions were of lesser importance at the beginning of the 1970s as the main emphasis then still was on more structural or nomothetic aspects of foreign language education. However, the importance of creativity and learner autonomy steadily grew in the 1980s and continues to do so (cf. e.g., Bruce 1989). Autonomy, on the other hand, correlates with creativity in that it liberates the learner from the direct influence of the teacher or the model given or influence exercised by printed materials, for instance. These two dimensions could be added to psychological features of the original classification or, preferably, called interactional features, as they are mainly built on different variations of interaction. Autonomy, for instance, does not necessarily mean that the learner has to work on his own; on the contrary, various small group configurations are possible (cf. Tella 1991).

In *Chart 1*, an attempt is made to define computer-mediated communication in terms of the above thirteen features:

Chart 1. Computer-mediated communication through psychological, interactional, and linguistic features.

<i>Psychological features</i>	<i>Computer-mediated communication</i>
1. Functional	yes
2. Central	yes
3. Affective	yes
4. Nomothetic	no
5. Idiographic	yes
6. Molar	yes (use of language)
7. Cyclic	—
8. Divergent	no
<i>Interactional features</i>	<i>Computer-mediated communication</i>
9. Creative	yes
10. Autonomous	yes
<i>Linguistic features</i>	<i>Computer-mediated communication</i>
1. General	no
2. Systematic	no
3. Unified	no

As to the tabulation and computer-mediated communication, a few explanatory notes are called for. Computer-mediated communication can be defined as functional, non-nomothetic, and molar. However, the first strategy (functional vs. non-functional) needs clarification, because if information about the target language and about its culture is given in the target language, the difference between these two features seems to disappear. In Bosco & Di Pietro's (1970) classification, the first strategy is obviously connected to the aspect of pragmatism. From the viewpoint of computer-mediated communication, even if the functional aspect is primary, the cultural (non-functional) side should not be neglected, either.

The language proficiency the user needs is integrative and global, leading to central cognitive processes. As for the affective feature, the answer is not that simple. Computer-mediated communication can lay emphasis on the affective domain by increasing the degree of authenticity, thus leading to an increased motivation on the learner's side. At the same time it must be borne in mind that messages transmitted via e-mail can be very straightforward and business-like, which may cause the recipients to interpret the messages too bluntly (cf. Tella 1991, 30–31). Various suggestions have been made concerning pictorial ways of showing affectivity in e-

mail communication (e.g., McCreary & Van Duren 1987; mail icons, see *Appendix O*).

The element of cyclicity is not, I could argue, directly applicable. As to divergency vs. non-divergency, computer-mediated communication *could* be taken to be divergent in the sense that it mainly stresses written language (comprehension and production). To be fully non-divergent or convergent, speech should also be included. In collaborative FL teaching situations, however, speech mostly precedes, accompanies, and even follows the actual process of writing or reading e-mail. In a wider perspective, computer-mediated communication certainly includes elements of non-divergency, as e-mail communication is incorporated into the whole learning cycle. This viewpoint becomes more evident when non-divergency is seen in relation to the three components of a method (cf. Richards & Rodgers 1982, 154).

The linguistic features are more difficult to define. It could be said that computer-mediated communication is unified in the sense that it *uses* the total structure of the language, but it does not attempt to build this structure up consciously. Interestingly enough, as Stern points out (1983, 488), none of the three strategies analysed in Bosco & Di Pietro (1970)—the grammar-translation method, the direct method, and the audiolingual method—aim at building up the language into a unified structure. Hence, it is no wonder computer-mediated communication cannot be assessed as unified, either.

Among *teaching strategies* Stern (1983, 505–506) subsumes a range of specified *teaching techniques*. In his terminology, teaching strategies (cf. *Figure 2*), timing strategies, and social strategies (cf. *Figure 3*) make up instructional options, corresponding mainly to Richards & Rodgers' procedures (1982, 153) but also including some elements of their concept of design.

Computer-mediated communication on communications networks is often (a) crosslingual and crosscultural. By 'crosslingual' Stern (1983, 505) refers to the use of the two languages (native and foreign) of the students. A crosscultural aspect is natural and analogous with foreign language teaching objectives. Further, computer-mediated communication can be (b) subjective (experiential and functional as well as message-centred with participant contributions), although foreign language teaching tends to be formal and analytical in classrooms. Finally, it is (c) implicit rather than explicit. Of course, it switches towards explicitness if, for example, language items are discussed in detail. This would roughly correspond to Widdowson's (1978) definition of the practice of the language

skills in the abstract when compared to their practice in a communicative situation, plausibly leading to an increased metalinguistic awareness among the students.

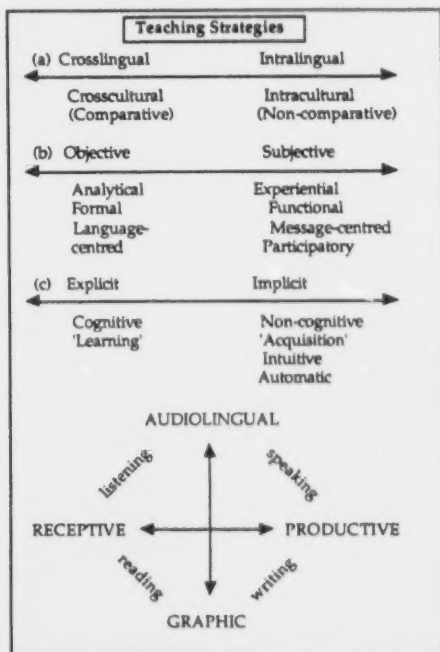


Figure 2. Teaching strategies (Stern 1983, 506).

This kind of context may arise if native speakers of English spontaneously—or consciously if asked by the teacher—comment on the language used by non-native speakers of English. Stern (1983, 507) hypothesises that explicit-implicit techniques are not irreconcilable—perhaps a well-balanced strategy requires some elements of both. Computer-mediated communication supposedly lays more stress on non-cognitive, non-reasoning aspects of language learning, pointing to 'acquisition' automaticity. However, metalinguistic awareness is often linked to written language as producing a text requires metalinguistic skills and a conscious and goal directed strategy (Pontecorvo & Paoletti 1991, 200).

Stern (1983, 506) also deals with the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), including them into the teaching strategies. Reading and writing form the graphic aspect, while listening and speaking are audiolingual. Computer-mediated communication combines the receptive and productive sides if the language user does not voluntarily restrict himself to being a non-participant observer ('lurker') of some noticeboards. In e-mail both sides—receptive and productive—are valid and far from uncalled-for.

Stern's instructional options equally include timing and social strategies (1983, 506) (cf. Figure 3). As these strategies—both timing and social—are part of instructional options along with teaching strategies, they also have an influence to be pondered upon from the viewpoint of computer-mediated communication. As to timing strategies, senior secondary school teachers of foreign languages are naturally obliged to obey the official rules and regulations concerning the allotted number of lessons per week and per course, among other things. Within these numbers, they are entitled to allocate the amount of time as they please. On account of the nature of e-mailing, it is natural to dedicate small amounts of allotted teaching and learning time to the use of international communications networks and e-mail. In this sense, it is probable that the employment of time tends to be rather distributed. However, one could imagine that a more concentrated period of time could be consecrated to e-mailing if, for instance, a project were set up in order to simulate a news agency or a newspaper editors' meeting.

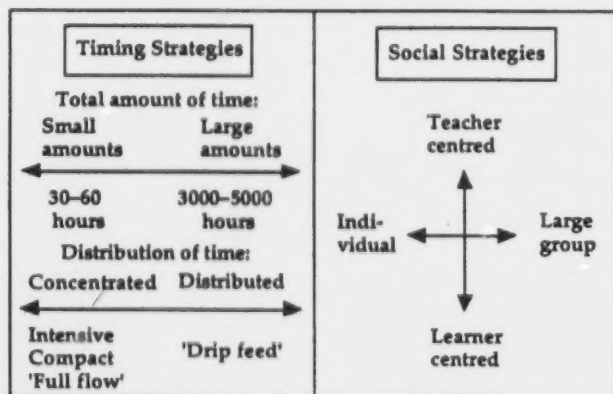


Figure 3. Timing and social strategies (Stern 1983, 506).

As for social strategies, it was pointed out in Tella (1991) that when international communications networks and e-mail were introduced into foreign language classrooms, the emphasis switched from teacher-centred, large group sponsored teaching towards a more individualised and learner-centred working environment. Wilkinson (1983, 211) is probably quite right in arguing that by creating communication environments that naturally encourage writing, computers may actually be able to offer new opportunities for learning by doing that are not available in non-computer classrooms. Thus the question, basically, concerns different teaching and learning strategies as well (cf. e.g., Meskill 1991; Nöjd 1985; Parry & al. 1985—86; Stanton 1991). In a way, this can also be seen as a deliberate choice made by the teacher; any time he¹ introduces the use of international communications networks and e-mail into his teaching, the learning environment tends to change towards individual and learner-centred dimensions. At the same time a change takes place in the interpersonal relations in the language class. Students' roles might change as their proficiency changes from an ordinary language learner towards a user of telemedium and modern technology.

¹ In this report, I have used 'he', 'his', and 'him' to refer generically to learners, students, teachers, and researchers. I hope the choice of the masculine gender will not be found offensive by the female readers.

3. Information Technology and Teaching

This chapter will discuss certain developments that have taken place in the field of Information Technology and its pedagogical applications. Second, it will briefly locate CALL (computer-assisted language learning) and distance education in these developments. It will also point out a number of features that characterise computer-mediated communication and media in general. Constant discussion and assessment are needed as the rate of progress is fast, and theoretical classifications—as well as interpretation of their significance—are constantly being modified. Finally, some perspectives of possible future developments will be described.

3.1. Computer-Based Education

Computer-based education (CBE; instruction, training, tutoring or learning) is usually divided into computer-assisted (or computer-aided) instruction and computer-managed instruction.

Computer-assisted instruction (CAI)¹ generally emphasises the complementary role of a computer in the teaching/learning process, even if computers are employed to provide instruction directly to learners. Correspondingly, the term 'computer-assisted language instruction' (CALI) is often used. In the United States, the term 'instruction' (CAI) has been preferred, which, in Europe, has sometimes been taken for a synonym for behavioural approaches. In Europe, more common acronyms have been CAL (computer-assisted learning) and CALL (computer-assisted language learning), supposedly representing a more learner-centred approach, focusing on independent, autonomous learning (cf. e.g., Smith & Keep 1988, 198). The main focus in these two approaches has usually been on the proceduralisation of the formal elements of the target language (cf. e.g., Cornu & al. 1990, 364), while in computer-mediated communication and in e-mail in particular, the computer serves not

¹ In Finnish, the corresponding acronym (TAO, *Tietokoneavusteinen opetus* = CAI) has lately been used less frequently, because it has sometimes been falsely connected to an Oriental movement of philosophy, and because TAO also is the official abbreviation of the Technical Work Teachers' Association (*Teknisten Aineiden Opettajat ry.*). The Finnish language terminology is dealt with by Maronen & Peltonen (1988) and Meisalo & Tella (1988, 165–166), for instance.

only as a learning tool but also as a tool for communication and information retrieval.

In Europe, and in Finland too, computer-assisted instruction has generally had precedence over computer-managed instruction at the secondary school level. It has been seen as complementing, not replacing the teacher. In computer-assisted instruction, the computer equally assists or aids the teacher, not only the learner, as it has been traditionally thought.

The acronyms CAI and CAL have recently been criticised. Hagler & Knowlton (1987), for instance, do not think it is more meaningful to speak of 'computer-assisted instruction' than it is to speak of 'blackboard-assisted instruction' or 'book-assisted instruction'. The use of the concepts CAI and CAL has also decreased, because their content area has grown larger than the terms imply, resulting in a need to delineate all the instructional uses of computers in some other way.

Computer-managed instruction (CMI) initially referred to the whole system of instruction and was often intended to replace the teacher. In CMI the computer took care of the whole process of teaching from the first diagnostic test to final evaluation of learning results. It was also employed to manage student performance data and instructional information. (E.g., Wilkinson & Patterson 1983, 5) This interpretation is still valid in many US schools and institutes, where the use of the computers is largely founded on financial or cost/effective aspects. In many European countries, however, as Self (1985, 12) remarks, computers are supposed to supplement, rather than replicate or replace the teacher.

Besides, the term 'computer-managed instruction' should rather be interpreted as computer-guided instruction, as the computer is only one of the tools which guide or which are used to deliver and to direct instruction. Other means of teaching, learning or demonstration are also used, such as videotapes, library, and records (cf. also Meisalo & Tella 1988, 67). In this respect, also computer-presented instruction, for instance using a datashow system or a projection pad (cf. e.g., Raymond 1987) as well as a video projector, could be included in the computer-managed instruction. But as the computer has in this kind of demonstrative use not only an instrumental function but also a thematic or didactic role, it would be logical to talk about computer-assisted instruction in this connection as well. Any terminological misunderstandings can, however, be avoided if one simply speaks of pedagogical applications of Information Technology, because then many applications and uses of computers not contained in traditional CAI or CAL are covered.

This is felicitous as the emerging telecommunications can then be included in these pedagogical applications as well. It equally concerns the use of e-mail when it is incorporated into FL teaching as in the present research project.

3.2. Computer Paradigm Shifts

In order to understand why communications networks and e-mail represent a technological innovation in foreign language education, it is necessary to recapitulate how foreign language specific pedagogical applications have evolved in the field of Information Technology. The progress closely follows the technological development of IT tools and the changes in the computer's role. These changes, as Tesler (1991, 55) argues, can be likened to computer paradigm shifts, happening at intervals of about a decade and made possible by improved technologies and matured markets. For instance, as early as the 1960s, large mainframe computers were used by a small number of university language educators. Interactive use was not at their disposal, because the huge costs, a primitive developmental stage of software, and cumbersome equipment restricted experimental enthusiasm. However, some courseware were designed, mainly on principles of programmed teaching, and disseminated in handouts and books in quite a large range of countries. (See e.g., Bramble & Mason 1985; Malinen 1985; Smith & Keep 1988) Garrett (1987, 170) calls this stage 'machine-driven foreign language computer-assisted instruction'.

In the early 1980s, the majority of courseware intended for the teaching of foreign languages was drill and practice -type activities, which infrequently formed a larger unity of teaching. For instance Evans & Collis (1987; referring to Collis & Green 1984a, 1984b) report that approximately 85 % of commercially published materials could be classified as drill and practice. Most language programs were planned, written, and programmed by other people than language educators. This resulted in products, whose methodological basis represented an old-fashioned and mechanistic view of the language teaching/learning process. The situation grew better when the development of CALL coincided with communicative methodology (Johns 1991, 21).

In the mid-to-late 1980s, an increasing number of language teachers became computer literate and started using computers while planning and carrying out their teaching. Many researchers (e.g., Kemble & Brierley 1991; Konttinen 1985; Leino 1987; Tesler

1991) found out that software tools (word-processors, spreadsheets, and database management applications, for instance), i.e., using computers as desktop productivity tools for writing, drawing, etc., represented a handy means of getting acquainted with computers and finding out that working with computers was meaningful and productive in one's own work. The focus was, however, moving towards a holistic learning environment. For instance, the use of international communications networks and e-mail started to disclose doors to an open, multimedia-based learning environment.

In short, as far as foreign language education is concerned, the general tendency has been the shift from drill and practice -type software first in the direction of computers as tools (word-processing, etc.), and, more recently, towards an even more open learning environment, in which all sorts of learning tools are fully utilised. The role of a microcomputer equally changed during this process, from an omniscient judge to a many-sided tool (cf. e.g., Tella 1991, 18). Meisalo (1990) underlined the fact that insofar as Information Technology was primarily intended to help the learner, a flexible man/machine interface was explicitly needed, taking the learner's individual level of learning into consideration. Meisalo's *extended market model* (Meisalo 1987; 1989) combines the idea of a flexible man/machine interface with the various aspects of how an individual, say, a computer end user, masters his learning and communication environment. When transposed to foreign language teaching, this could be summarised by stating that while drill and practice -type software closely resembled a closed language system, e-mail systems, for instance, represent, or at least simulate, the concretisation of real world at a much higher level. In fact, the communicator is very much in a genuine communicative situation at least as long as the teacher understands to let the student communicate freely and at his own pace. In this way, metaphorically, the student's learning environment is an extended market, i.e., the communicator can make use of various possibilities, different routes, and options. In fact, three viewpoints are combined: the logical character of man's thinking processes, the contact with the outside world, and the man/machine interface (cf. also Meisalo & Tella 1988, 68-70; Weston-Bartholomew 1991).

Distance education (sometimes called multiform learning, when distance education and ordinary contact or face-to-face education are combined) has profited a lot from these developments (cf. e.g., Gray 1988; Kaye 1987; Paakkola 1991; Rekkedal & Paulsen 1989; Thombs, Sails & Alcott 1989). It could be said that the new

kind of learning environment has essentially changed the teaching/learning process and made it more versatile, for instance by giving more independence of time and space. In fact, computer-mediated communication and distance education have a lot in common. In both of them, technology can take students into otherwise inaccessible environments (cf. e.g., Bruce 1989, 243). From the foreign language education point of view, computer-mediated communication has to be contrasted with CALL, on one hand, and with distance education, on the other. It is easy to notice that distance education and computer-mediated learning share a number of elements, viz. the same kind of equipment can be used, the sender and the recipient need not and will not necessarily meet or see each other, as most communication is taken care of through electronic messaging. On the other hand, learning experiences can resemble each other to some extent. In both forms of learning and communication, interaction with co-learners can contribute to creating a fruitful learning environment. On the other hand, independent (self-directed) or autonomous work is equally possible. The teacher's role is usually fairly active in distance education but when distance education is replaced by or at least contrasted with computer conferencing (one form of computer-mediated communication), teachers tend to become consultants or co-learners, whose earlier status diminish or disappear completely. The basic question, of course, is whether some factual information or knowledge is being transferred through computer conferencing or distance education or whether the question is focused on interactional effort and process-led collaboration.

Boyd (1987) sees three kinds of new educational opportunities through computer-mediated communications systems. First, epistemological viewpoints, connected to discursive flexibility facilitated by e-mail systems. The communication on these systems is not usually restricted in the same way as in mass media in general. Besides, it is bi- or multidirectional (from one/many to one/many), while mass media represent unidirectional communication (from one to many only). Second, affiliative viewpoints, which provide learners with new opportunities for peer tutoring and for establishing long-term affiliations between students and their school / teachers, or among students. Third, the physical flexibility offered by computer-mediated communications systems give new opportunities for students to study in more convenient places and at more convenient times. (Boyd 1987, 150—151) At school level, this can mean that some activities are shifted from the FL classroom into the school library, the computer laboratory or some other room or,

perhaps, to be fulfilled in the homes of the students. If students access e-mail at home too as in Stonier's vision (1988), they will be able to exchange ideas with each other and with their teachers to a greater extent than up till now.

According to Stonier (1988, 685), over the next few decades, traditional institution-based education will give way to computer-based education, which will result in a pronounced shift of educational activity back into the home as the primary seat of learning—a shift away from the current institutional settings such as schools, colleges or universities. In Stonier's vision (1988, 686), all children will have a microcomputer system at home, which will allow them to network not only to their own school, the local education system, but also databases throughout the world. Learning software or 'electronic learning packages' will use possibilities offered by new Information Technologies, for example CD-ROMs. Electronic mail in its advanced form will allow interaction between student and teacher, and, more important, between student and student. Stonier (1988, 686) believes that in the future students' homework will be presented in both electronic form and as print-outs, which is facilitated by schools having more extensive (compatible) computer, printing and communications facilities.

In widely adapted and technically advanced CBE (voice chips, voice-to-print, voice-to-voice, optical fibre links to intelligent databases, etc.), basic skills (reading, writing, and counting) will be learnt at home as well as some introducing subjects, like biology, history, economics. At school, instead, students play with each other, they acquire social skills, go in for sports, fiddle with machinery, perform experiments, put on plays and so on. All in all—home will become the place to go to learn; school will become the place to go to play. (Stonier 1988, 686—687) A point to be added to Stonier's vision is the growing importance of the interaction between teachers, which will be made possible by new Information Technologies (for further future visions, cf. e.g., Cerf 1991; Dertouzos 1991; Negroponte 1991; Sproull & Kiesler 1991; Tesler 1991; Weiser 1991, and especially Kay 1991).

When talking about different areas of research which should be underlined, Smith (1988) points out the following:

- a) The evolution of a specific language of discourse mediated by electronic communications systems;
- b) 'Knowledge Transfer' problems related to the elicitation of professional knowledge at the propositional and deep knowledge levels;
- c) The social dynamics of electronically mediated interaction;

- d) The effectiveness of electronic networks in supporting local curriculum developments;
- e) The growth of an 'electronic grey literature'. (Smith 1988, 58)

Smith's (1988) areas of research are indicative of the differences between computer-mediated communication and traditional pen-and-paper communication. He acknowledges, for instance, that the language used in computer-mediated communication is not yet quite known, and therefore will be worth studying. Another point is the amount and quality of interaction initiated or generated by computer-mediated communication.

The presentation of these visions is motivated by the fact that introducing communications networks into foreign language teaching represents a technological innovation. From a broader perspective, when McCarroll (1991) analysed the expectations and the realisations of a number of new IT applications intended for use in the home and at the office, he concluded that among these applications, such as home banking, home shopping, electronic libraries, electronic mail, and video-conferencing, there were generally exaggerated expectations regarding their panning out, failing to overcome earlier habits. Among these applications, electronic mail, however, suffered the least from heavy shortfall, although it has not quite managed to overcome human habits, like jotting down memos and using note pads (McCarroll 1991, 57). Many other specialists in the field of networked communication (e.g., Cerf 1991; Dertouzos 1991; Negroponte 1991; Sproull & Kiesler 1991; Tesler 1991), on the other hand, speak strongly in favour of global communications networks, insofar as they will grow into a powerful infrastructure on which future communication solutions will be built. Negroponte (1991, 78), for example, when thinking of products and services for future computer networks, states that "[i]ndependence of space and time is the single most valuable service and product we can provide humankind." In fact, the present research project largely focuses on the areas of research indicated by Smith (1988). Besides, e-mail communication, in its way, certainly paves the way for independence of space and time.

3.3. Media and Learning

Communications networks consist of the telematic and social structures. The *telematic structure* is made of various technical and technological means (cf. e.g., Rogers & Kincaid 1981). The *social struc-*

ture of a communications network, on the other hand, consists of the interindividual relations enabled by the physical structure. A communications network makes it possible for its users to access and profit by electronic mail, for instance. The concept of an electronic 'mailbox', however, is an abstraction, as the user need not know where his messages are stored. Multidirectional communication makes it possible for individuals, teaching groups or schools to be in contact with one another. Together, the social structure and the telematic structure form the *communication structure* of a communications network (for a closer analysis, cf. Tella 1991, 23).

From the viewpoint of the teaching/learning process, this double character of the communication structure needs further analysis. An international communications network and e-mail constitute *multimedia* (analysis of the term, cf. e.g., Kozma 1991, 199), which utilise a number of technical devices (computer, modem, telephone, etc.). From the user's perspective, the microcomputer—and the word-processor at his disposal—however, forms the main medium. At a higher level, the concept of an information society is relevant, as it also implies that members of such a society have enough technological hardware (computers, etc.) at their disposal. The concept of an information society thus works as an eliminating external factor, and it simultaneously represents a superstructure that characterises the whole society.

It seems, however, erroneous to assume that the medium itself would have a decisive effect on teaching or learning (cf. e.g., Kozma 1991; Pederson 1986; 1987; Salomon 1974; 1979a; 1979b). What appears more important is the way the learning contents are gathered, encoded, sorted, and conveyed by the medium. This argument is analysed by Salomon (1974; 1979a; 1979b) in a way that is appropriate for the analysis of e-mail as well. The following review of the basic tenets of Salomon's model (1979a, 216 in particular) is based on Pederson (1987, 111—115), because she focuses them directly on the design of CALL basic research, which Salomon could not do at the time when microcomputers were still relatively few and unfamiliar.

The ways a medium stores and delivers instruction (its coding elements) rather than the medium itself stand the best chance of affecting cognition. The way CALL materials are designed is much more conducive to affecting learning than the simple use of some CALL software in teaching. Therefore CALL software should not be compared to some other medium as such. These coding elements often mirror or activate a cognitive subskill in human learners (focusing, organising, highlighting). These subskills are often those

most affected in students as a result of the use of the coding element. Different learners are affected in different ways by the use of any given coding element. (Pederson 1987, 111—115)

Pederson (1986; 1987) tested what kind of influence the removal of cues in written exercises had on the performance of language learners. The absence of cues tended to activate and enrich the performance of high-verbal-ability learners, but frustrate learners whose verbal abilities were inferior to the rest of the learners. On the whole, different learners are affected in different ways by their perceptions of the task expectations related to their use of instruction that is transmitted via a given coding element. Sometimes the situation facilitates learning (in case of books, for instance). In an e-mail sponsored learning environment, the help provided by the books, by other students (peer tutoring), and by the teacher equally counts. A medium's coding elements often will interact with related learner differences and related learning tasks. This reflects the way individuals behave or believe they are expected to behave in a learning situation. (Pederson 1987, 111—115)

The three main elements of Salomon's research model (Symbol Systems and Coding Elements; Task Requirements; Learner Variables) will be described in the following, with subsequent focus on the use of international communications networks and e-mail.

Symbol Systems and Coding Elements

Pederson (1987) concludes that instead of assuming that a medium (for instance as complex as CAI) could make the difference in learning results, Salomon maintained the need to isolate an essential attribute of a medium which might affect learning. Then this attribute should be examined in relation to what is already known about language learning. Salomon argues that a medium's coding elements are not invariant (1979b). Pederson (1987) mentions a coding element like 'random access', which can be utilised in several media applications, such as interactive video and conventional flash cards. Salomon insists that no coding element must be attributed to one medium only. Yet each medium utilises the coding elements in ways diverging from one medium to another. (Pederson 1987, 112—113) In traditional CALL or distance education, certain attributes of a medium, such as random access, are often used on the software designer's or the teacher's terms; the learner does not necessarily have free choice to opt or opt out all or any of these attributes. In an e-mail sponsored learning environment, random access and random yet deliberate choice can be interpreted to take

place at various levels, i.a. in decisions the learner makes concerning what communications networks, conferences, noticeboards or other services he wants to make use of at any particular time. Admittedly, this is an utterly different perspective at this attribute of electronic media. It is also indicative of and analogous with the principles of an open, multimedia-based learning environment (cf. e.g., Tella 1991, 16—22) in that more freedom and decision power is yielded to the user.

Task Requirements

No satisfactory results can be expected from research on use vs. non-use of certain coding elements. The effect of a given coding element is always determined to some extent by the learner's task orientation (perception of what is supposed to be learned), which Salomon describes as *selective attention*. In software design, according to Pederson (1987, 113) special attention should be paid to those coding elements that learners perceive will help them perform well. Pederson concludes that "for Salomon the essential research question in choosing the combination of coding element and task variables to investigate is whether the mental activities that the coding element activates are task-relevant. (...) Investigations should be conducted on the ways in which well-designed CALL software that uses coding elements efficiently may be able to activate and cultivate dormant but needed metacognitive strategies (developing strategic competence, acquiring vocabulary through listening comprehension, imitating phrases that are 'turned' in a novel manner in the target language, raising the level of processing from a syntactic to a semantic level) in nonnative speakers" (Pederson 1987, 114).

On the basis of those experiences gained in the fieldwork period of the present research project (Tella 1991), it does not seem premature to conclude that an e-mail sponsored learning environment meets quite a number of the requirements Salomon put forward. For instance, working on international communications networks effortlessly turns into task-relevant assignments, which, if the communicative purpose of the incoming messages is respected, is likely to contribute to meaningful development of learners' strategic competence and communication strategies. As the learners are also bound to face modern, up-to-date use of the target foreign language on the communications networks, this can be seen to raise their consciousness of the language used (metalinguistic awareness).

Learner Variables

Research on CALL has paid little attention to learner variables, such as cognitive development, preference of learning styles, skill factors, and experience. Furthermore, very little if any emphasis has been focused on the learner's personality development, which is one of the general goals in Finnish senior secondary schools, for instance. Different kinds of social and negotiation skills are also mostly neglected in traditional CALL, as it has often concentrated on one student at a time. Given that learners are likely to adapt themselves to the learning task and to the coding elements at their disposal in varying ways, it can be hypothesised that a specific use of a given coding element is not applicable to everybody. Besides, there is always a certain amount of interaction between aptitude, the task and the coding elements. Salomon points out that the research design should include the coding element which seems to be in harmony with the cognitive ability structure of the learner, which he can utilise best in the given learning task (1979a, 73).

On adapting Salomon's models (1974; 1979a; 1979b) to a research project concerning Information Technology and FL teaching, it can be seen that a lot of central features are already taken into consideration, such as psycholinguistic factors, expectations meshed with the learning task, learning differences between learners, and factors generated by the medium (e-mail on communications networks). Salomon's model represents a holistic research design, which makes the effort of getting rid of the earlier non-theoretical research approaches. Naturally, Salomon is not alone in this effort. The transactional model of language development (Evans & Collis 1987), for instance, also considers the interactions between the learner, the environment, and other individuals¹. What should still be pointed out is the responsibility an individual learner is expected to assume when the degree of freedom and the level of decision making is raised. The responsibility in this connection also con-

¹ The transactional model of language development is in opposition to models based on behavioural and closed language system models. It underlines an open language system, which functions within a global semiotic system. The semiotic system, is divisible but not reducible into grapho-phonemic, syntactic, semantic, and contextual subsystems. None of these subsystems is functionally independent of the other subsystems. The transactional model of language development reflects the natural language learning process, focused on the process and the integrated linguistic experiences. (Evans & Collis 1987)

cerns the learning assignments the learner either chooses himself or that are assigned to the learner by the teacher, but still in close co-operation with him.

4. Writing and Reading

The present study is concerned with three different starting-points: first, *writing* as a highly cognitive activity, which can be carried out on one's own or in other people's company; second, *e-mail communication*, regarded on one hand as texts and, on the other hand, as cognitive processes and as communicative acts. It can be considered both an individual writing performance or a process-led collaborative activity. It can also be looked at as a product, whose literary, informative, and communicative values vary considerably depending on a number of aspects connected to it. E-mails can—and usually do—contain distinct communicative purposes to be reacted to. The third starting-point is *reading*, regarded also as a highly cognitive activity, to be carried out on one's own or in company, usually triggering off or calling for authentication of the original message. The research methodology should be able to take all the three starting-points into consideration.

Earlier it was argued (Tella 1991) that during fieldwork the relationships between writers and readers (audience) were subject to poor audience consciousness. This also concerned the relationship between subject (or topic) and the way it was introduced. This is closely associated with the different *modes of writing* in any particular social context, such as (i) overall purposes of writing (poetic, transactional, reporting, generalising); (ii) particular purposes (personal, logical, concrete, serious, humorous) depending on varying situations; (iii) conventions depending on various social contexts (conversations, lectures, courtroom declarations), and (iv) different rules for different speech acts (requests, commands, questions, often referred to as language functions) (cf. Myers 1985, 89). What has been underlined for quite a long time now, is the *communication triangle* of speaker, listener, and subject. The three elements could also be writer, reader, and topic or transmitter, receiver, and message or equally informer, informed, and information, but the question of the superstructure of discourse always concerns the first, second, and third persons. The *I—you* relation concerns communication, i.e., how someone abstracts for an audience; the *I—it* relation concerns information, i.e., how someone abstracts from raw phenomena. (Cf. Moffett 1983, 10, 18) Correspondence, in its conventional form, can be seen as dialogue-at-a-distance, as Moffett (1983, 41) defines it, as an exchange of written monologue.

In ordinary speech act situations the basic communication triangle is likely to work alright. However, in computer-mediated communication, the communication situation cannot any longer be

deciphered through these three components only, because it highly resembles oral, not written, communication and because the *I—you* or *I—it* relations frequently change into the plural (*we—you* or *we—they*). Besides, the incoming or outgoing messages are often separate from the linguistic situation itself. Several factors may intervene, e.g., co-operation and negotiations among students or between students and the teacher. The form of the communication triangle tends to grow in different directions, in time as well as in space. In the first research report (Tella 1991) it turned out to be a prerequisite to have high communication proximity links (cf. Rogers & Kincaid 1981, 150) between various communicators in order to guarantee a sufficiently regular and solid degree of stability of the communication structure. The degree of proximity had little to do with geographical distances. An overseas link could be felt as close as a link between two schools in the same town. However, until the stability of the communication structure was established, it was not possible to really speak of any communication triangle.

Whatever the way the communication triangle is divided into its components (examples, see e.g., Myers 1985, 90–91) or enlarged into new configurations, the different modes of writing are of interest. The categorisation above is one way to divide these modes. Many of earlier categorisations are based on literary texts, and one should seriously ask whether these classifications hold as far as computer-mediated communication is concerned. Originally, e-mail, for instance, was designed for rapid exchange of business-like messages. However, in a school context the modes of writing may change and somehow, or at least to some extent, become analogous with the modes usually referred to in classroom writing. Now that a process-based writing is often used (process or collaborative writing), the question of the writer / informer / sender becomes slightly confusing. Some of the language used will also be focused on metalinguistic and metadidactic purposes. Also, phatic use of language (contact establishing and supporting) will probably be of utmost importance in order to uphold the functionality of the triangle and to keep the communication channel open. It remains to be seen whether any artistic, emotive or poetic functions can be fulfilled while using e-mail or whether most of the language is referential or informative use of the target language. An important point is also to analyse what kind of information is exchanged and how this information is linguistically and thematically organised (cf. e.g., De Bernardi & Levorato 1991).

As to school writing in general, research, like the International Study of Achievement in Written Composition (IEA), shows that the most dominant feature of writing situations in school is often the parameter of contents (topic, theme) and the contents themselves frequently suggest a possible textual form. (Vähäpassi 1987)

Figure 4 depicts a typical writing situation in school, indicating the necessity to have at least some overlap between the writer's and the reader's schemata and between their linguistic and rhetorical resources. The contextual factors in a writing situation become important in international contexts, as the intersubjective distance between the writer(s) and the reader(s) can vary considerably, depending not only on geographical distances but also on crosscultural differences. (Vähäpassi 1987)

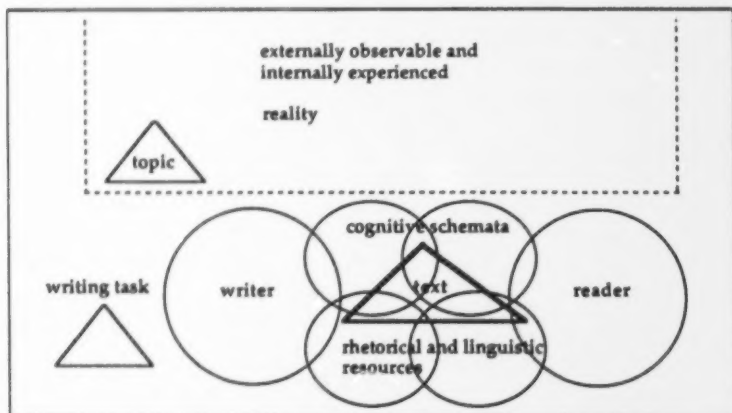


Figure 4. Contextual factors in a writing situation (Vähäpassi 1987, 8).

Although Figure 4 presents some essential factors affecting the writing situation, it fails to show that the topics and the writing tasks can—and should if Widdowson's (1978) definition of 'authenticity' is accepted—cross-fertilise each other so that not all writing tasks are necessarily given from outside, i.e., as teacher generated assignments or derived from other teaching materials (textbooks, etc.); rather, they are to be thought of as genuine writing tasks with distinct communicative purposes. Besides, topics and writing tasks should not be considered as separate units, as in Figure 4. The interaction between the reader(s) and the writer(s) should play a major role in the choice of topics. A topic initiated or discussed can also lead to continuation, i.e., another student—or a group of stu-

dents—carries on the discussion along the lines scheduled by the original writer(s). In this sense, writing and reading are mutually generative agents which may lead to a series of e-mails dealing with the same topic.

Figure 4 also ignores the social interaction between different parties involved in the linguistic situation, i.e. the fact that process (or collaborative) writing utilises the ideational processes of several students and, perhaps, those of the teacher. At the other end of the line, there may be several recipients as readers, which enables different kinds of interpretations of the message. This kind of situation capitalises on interactive process-led collaboration, creativeness of individual writers, and individual readers' capacity to interpret the incoming message. The rhetoric and linguistic resources which are at FL writers' disposal can be expected to be inferior to those available to mother tongue writers. In the present study, however, the dimension of foreign language—mother tongue varied greatly. Both language groups were represented as writers and readers. Also readers need enough linguistic resources in order to fully decipher and appreciate the message prepared by native speakers of English. One more consideration would be to add the imaginative or fictional world ("non-reality"). It would also seem more logical to wrap the writers and the readers inside or within the reality/fiction dimension. Figure 5 aims at outlining the writing/reading situation in e-mail communication in a way that takes the above considerations into account.

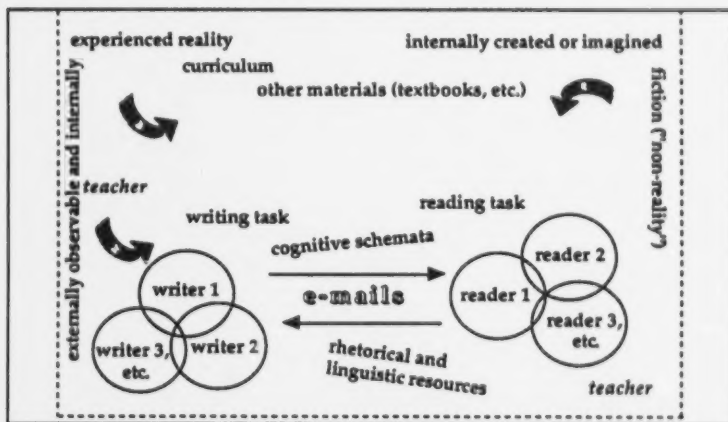


Figure 5. Contextual factors in an e-mail communication writing/reading situation (adapted from Vähäpassi 1987, 8).

Applebee (1981) summarises some research findings about what teachers of different subjects are concerned with when assigning writing tasks (see Figure 6). Teachers of English (as mother tongue) emphasise clear expression, writing mechanics, and proper essay form. FL teachers are similarly concerned with the mechanics of writing in the target language, but place more emphasis on subject-area material and less on personal experience than do the English teachers. (Applebee 1981, 62) These findings appear rather analogous with research findings made by the IEA researchers; conative and expressive functions seem to be rather neglected in school writing (cf. e.g., Vähäpassi 1987).

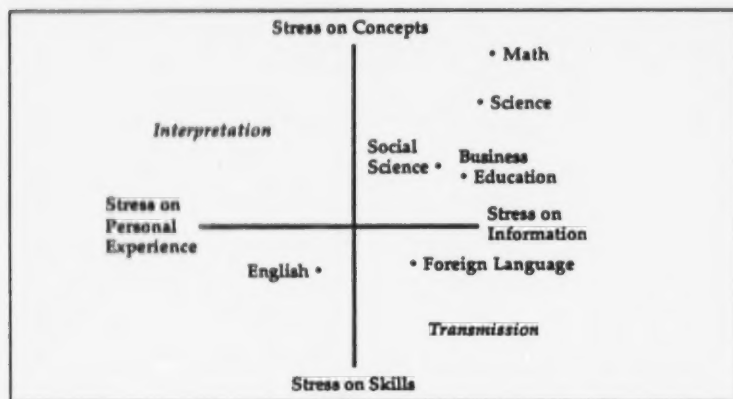


Figure 6. Purposes for assigning writing (Applebee 1981, 62).

Research on writing can nowadays be divided into three main emphases: (i) analyses of the products of writing (writing as text); (ii) investigations into composing (writing as mental process), and (iii) analyses of the settings and functions of written texts (writing as communicative act) (White 1985; cited in Péry-Woodley 1991, 69). Péry-Woodley further argues that the most valuable research appears to integrate the three directions by looking at "textual products as traces of a communicative activity—the production of textual meaning by the writer—designed to guide another communicative activity—the construction of textual meaning by the reader" (1991, 69). Hull (1989) summarises the changes taken place in teaching and studying writing in the following way:

Chart 2. Changing notions about teaching and studying writing (Hull 1989, 106).

	Early Research	Recent Work on Process	Recent Work on Context
How Do We Define Writing?	As a finished product	As a complex cognitive process	As a cognitive process embedded in a social context
Who Among Our Students Can Write?	Those who have the "right stuff"	Those who have a robust writing process	Those who have gained entry to a discourse community
What Is Writing Research?	Error counts and quality assessments	Process descriptions	Analyses of the interactions among processes and contexts
What Is Writing Instruction?	Marking and responding to finished products	Providing practice in the process of writing	Creating discourse communities with authentic tasks and social interaction

The main focus has shifted from the finished product to the process itself, identifying writing as an activity. Writing has been recognised as a complex cognitive process, which calls for many teachable skills. Moreover, emphasis is laid also on the social side of the writing process. When these emphases are related to computer-mediated communication and e-mail, research should be done on whether this kind of learning environment favours practice in the process of writing, for example, and social interaction with real or genuine writing tasks geared towards discourse communities. What could, perhaps, be added to Hull's (1989) classification, is the function of writing as a tool for learning, i.e., writing as seen through the perspective of transmitting genuine information and learning by doing so. This might be implied in Hull's discourse communities with authentic tasks and social interaction, but it still seems important enough to be raised into focus.

Many of the afore-mentioned features are included in the so-called whole language writing approach. Chart 3 summarises some of the features of this approach and contrasts them with more traditional approaches to teaching writing.

Chart 3. *Contrasting whole language and traditional approaches to teaching writing (Varble 1990, 246).*

Whole Language	Traditional
Whole to parts learning is emphasized.	Parts to whole learning is emphasized.
Process is most important.	Product is most important.
Language learning is based on experience.	Language learning is based on hierarchy of skills.
Learners use writing for personal purposes.	Learners use writing to satisfy others.
Learning begins with need and moves to skills.	Learning begins with skills and moves to need.
Need -> Writing -> Skills	Skills -> Writing -> Need
Language is learned through social context.	Language is learned through skills.
School environment is like home.	School environment is different from home.
Students choose topics.	Teacher assigns topics.
Invented spelling is encouraged.	Emphasis is on correct spelling.
Evaluation is informal.	Evaluation is formal.

The whole language approach reflects quite a few of the principles presented earlier in this report and which are related to a communicative methodology in FL teaching, i.e., a holistic view on writing, based on experiential learning, carried out through social and negotiable interaction. It also accentuates free topic choice made by the students, in comparison with teacher-assigned writing tasks.

The third starting-point of the present study concerns reading. As explained above, in e-mail communication reading is closely connected to the interpretative process of the incoming messages. Basically, reading can be seen as a "cognitive process of inferring meaning from the visual symbols commonly called print" (Geoffrion & Geoffrion 1983, 11). Geoffrion & Geoffrion (1983) further point out six different aspects included in the definition of reading. First, as a cognitive process, reading is more closely tied to thought and language than to motor or perceptual processes. Second, comprehension (inferred meaning) comes from inside the mind, not from the text itself. Third, reading involves processes distinct from listening and speaking (visual symbols). Fourth, as reading is connected to print, it must be understood that print, unlike pictographs, consists of arbitrary codes that represent spoken sounds and meanings. Fifth, different materials (books, newspapers, letters, instruction materials, advertisements, and signs) usually call for different

reading skills. And sixth, the purpose for reading shapes the skills involved; reading for enjoyment, for instance, differs from reading for information. (Geoffrion & Geoffrion 1983, 11)

The importance of reading was also underlined in the first report (Tella 1991), in which, among other things, the following aspects were analysed: the genuine or authentic character of texts, a reader-centred approach concerning the interpretation of texts, reacting to texts in various student groupings (autonomous or independent work; dyads; small groups; whole class). These aspects will not be brought into focus in this report, unless some new emphasis is laid upon them. What is underlined somewhat more in this report concerns the conscious interpretation of the text from the linguistic viewpoint, aiming at a heightened metalinguistic awareness of the target language.

As to FL reading, four *reading styles* are often referred to, viz. skimming, scanning, intensive reading, and extensive reading, but when reading a text, several of these styles can—and often are—applied one after another (Williams & Moran 1989, 222). I already contended (Tella 1991) that e-mails do not necessarily have to lend themselves to intensive reading, especially if this means stressing the structural or nomothetic features of the texts; rather, more importance is derived from finding out and reacting to the communicative purposes of those messages. On an information retrieval plane, of course, an intensive approach can be quite a sound one. *Reading skills* (acquired abilities to read) and *reading strategies* (conscious procedures towards problem solving) have been categorised in various ways (cf. e.g., Williams & Moran 1989). Classifications of reading skills, such as Davis' four skills (identifying word meanings; drawing inferences; identifying the writer's technique and recognising the mood of the passage; finding answers to questions) (1968; cited in Williams & Moran 1989, 223) are of interest but their practical utility mainly lies on those features that are not necessarily accepted as intrinsic to the reading process itself. For instance, the fourth skill of Davis (finding answers to questions) is essential in e-mail communication in order to guarantee an exchange of ideas, but it is more related to interactional strategies and the social structure of a communications network than basically to the reading process. Besides, reading skills are most probably rather interdependent and cannot be treated or taught separately (cf. e.g., Geoffrion & Geoffrion 1983, 12). Reading strategies are usually defined to focus more on problem solving, which is more appropriate from the viewpoint of the present study. It is true that on-line reading tools, such as an on-line dictionary or a glos-

sary (cf. e.g., Geoffrion & Geoffrion 1983, 9) can assist the reader to comprehend the words better, in which case the use of a computer may facilitate the reading process and strengthen some of the reading skills. It is, however, beyond the scope of this study to analyse thoroughly some reading strategies, such as SQRRR (survey, question, read, recite, review—cf. e.g., Geoffrion & Geoffrion 1983, 126—127).

To sum up, several features are tied to both writing and reading as far as e-mail communication is concerned. Features included in the writing process consist, i.a., of topic choice, ideas and ideational processes (creativity), facts the writer knows about the topic, general knowledge about the background, linguistic resources, choice of an appropriate mode of writing, general writing skills, typing skills, and, more generally speaking, computer skills or computer literacy (tri-literacy at its best), social and negotiation skills. Reading, on the other hand, stands for information retrieval and message interpretation, calling for different reading skills. Social skills are needed if the message is interpreted among several readers. The knowledge of the writer's cultural background usually facilitates and guides the interpretative process. The reader has to understand the factual contents of the message but at the same time understand and, perhaps, even appreciate its style and language register (rhetoric and linguistic resources). Various reading strategies are equally needed. Computer literacy (tri-literacy) is equally needed in order to be able to study the incoming messages and to react to them correspondingly.

5. Research Methodology

This chapter will discuss the ways to be used in the subsequent analysis of the data gathered in the fieldwork period of the research project from November 1989 until May 1990. The main data gathering techniques included participant-observation, analysis of electronic and printed files of e-mail correspondence between different participants (communication on the communications networks saved as text files and printed on paper), informal discussions and chats with the participating teachers (and some students) connected to planning and assessment sessions, and teachers' and students' questionnaires. The data gathering and analysis techniques used in the first part of the research project are described and assessed in Tella (1991, 58–66). In this chapter, a number of complementing ideas will be presented, together with an approach more appropriate for the specific purpose of this report, i.e., analysis of the themes and topics as well as the language used in e-mail communication during fieldwork.

Anthropologists continue to argue (cf. e.g., Wolcott 1988, 190; see also Syrjäläinen 1991) whether crosscultural experience should be a prerequisite for ethnographic research in schools. Wolcott (1988, 190) stresses one point rather critically: an ethnographer often tries to conduct observations *as though* he were in a strange new setting; in practice and in most cases, the setting has been familiar to the researcher since his earliest school days, although school might have naturally changed a lot from those days. The stand-point of Goetz & LeCompte (1984, 10) is rather defensive when they contend that ethnographers tend to act in settings familiar to them as if they were totally unknown for not generalising from their own experiences to the new settings. In the present study, part of the fieldwork setting was located in foreign countries (Britain, the USA, Canada, the former German Democratic Republic, the former Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, Iceland, Sweden, and Japan) and therefore in cultural and linguistic situations with the Finnish participants only knew in a restricted fashion. Likewise, the English (and other foreign) participants knew the Finnish circumstances and school context rather poorly. In brief, crosscultural differences counted in this study. However, the main focus of the first part (Tella 1991) was on the Finnish side, on Finnish classrooms, students, and teachers. In this report, as far as contents and language are concerned, the same amount of focus will be laid on foreign participants' contributions as on those of the Finnish students and teachers.

Goetz & LeCompte (1984, 96) believe the issue of language fluency is critical. They argue that even when an ethnographer works within his own language and culture, linguistic misunderstandings may arise at various levels, if the researcher does not realise that meanings given to words and deeds by the participants may radically differ from the use of language of the researcher. The more familiar the research setting is, the more difficult it might be to tell these differences. It is, however, crucial for the researcher to be familiar with the *argot* used by the observed (LeCompte & Goetz 1984, 41).

An ethnographic approach has not been widely used in foreign language specific research, and even far less when communications networks and e-mail are combined in the research design. According to Pederson (1987, 122—124), ethnographic methods have been used at least in three extensive CALL projects in the USA: Blomeyer (1985); Lozano & al. (1985), and Robinson & al. (1985). Blomeyer (1985) examined the use of CALL as a curricular innovation in two on-site case studies in high schools. He found out that no specific characteristics of the CALL software interfered with the educational objective of the material. Unfortunately, CALL use apparently did not affect problem solving or other higher-level cognitive strategies. In Lozano's & al. (1985) study, the incorporated ethnographic approach helped to eliminate the irregularities in the teaching that occurred in the individual class sections. (Pederson 1987, 122—123) Robinson & al. (1985) videotaped student interviews in the computer laboratory as well as sessions with staff and observers. The transcripts of the interviews revealed the kind of information that would probably never have come to the attention of the researchers and teachers otherwise.

The ethnographic data revealed both positive and negative views toward the use of CALL. On the positive side, it was noticed that the computer was a forgiving tutor; the computer treated all students the same; self-pacing and individualisation was considered beneficial; students were more motivated to stay 'on task' than in regular classroom activities, and students became more computer literate. On the other hand, the computers were regarded as too inflexible; their novelty wore off after a while, and they were impersonal. What the ethnographer found out was that students tended to speak more favourably about the software their own teacher had designed. In a way, the students had developed a sense of ownership to this kind of software and they were proud of it. (Pederson 1987, 123) As regards the present study, some of the above findings probably still hold; others should constantly be ques-

tioned, however. For instance, the use of e-mail may be mixed up with the novelty value of computers, or, by contrast, some technical hitches encountered in word-processing may jeopardise the assets of e-mailing. Participant-observation may help to solve these kinds of problems.

In the present study, methodologically, an ethnographic approach will be complemented with other analytical methods, such as a content analysis (cf. e.g., Berelson 1952; Pietilä 1976; Weber 1985). The conclusions will be combined with observations made during the fieldwork period.

As to the structure of e-mails, the textual superstructure (van Dijk 1980) or certain regularities at conceptual level and corresponding functional parts in the text (e.g., the way to start one's presentation, the way to handle the subject matter and the way to finish it off) may get simplified and there might be a quality change in the form of messages, which can also reflect on their contents. E-mail communication can be, however, relatively laconic and terse, and therefore a research design, based for instance on Brown's learning strategy experiments (1985) or Busch's ARMS (= anticipate, read, map, summarise) and ERRQ (= estimate, read, respond, question) strategies (1985), in the way Blom, Linnakylä & Takala (1988) have done, is not quite to the point in the present study. Lehtinen (1987, 2) points out that in research on writing, the author is free to choose his methods and levels of analysis, even if the choice of a viewpoint (first of all, the theoretical background and the method to be implemented) will lead to a different approach to the target to be studied (cf. also Huhta 1987). Nordenbo (1990, 70) refers to the same, although from a slightly different point of view: "Although there are a number of standard methods available for the analysis of data, including numerical material, under various conditions, there is as yet no well established and generally recognized method for the analysis of textual material. Unlike the researcher who uses quantitative analyses, one wishing to make use of qualitative analyses in his or her investigations is often advised to develop his or her own methods."

It is true that there are some analytical methods based on several criteria, such as general impression, focus of the writing, organisation or set-up of the written product, argumentation, and mechanics (e.g., Quellmalz 1984), but these are difficult to adapt for e-mail correspondence as they customarily expect a large number of writings from the same topic and roughly using the same category of writing, e.g., expository writing. It is also worth remembering, as Lehtinen observes (1987, 3-4), that product-based research

is historically the first step in writing research and then the text analysis has to face the text as a complex phenomenon, which has internal laws of its own, the describing of which is the aim of text analysis.

Methods which emulate the writing process include, among other things, behavioural protocols (what the writer does is recorded), retrospective reports (the writer tells the researcher about his ways to write after the writing assignment), direct reports (the writer tells during the writing process about certain aspects connected to the writing itself which have been settled in advance), and the protocols of thinking aloud one's thoughts (the writer describes everything that takes place during the writing process) (Lehtinen 1987, 10; see also Erickson & Simon 1984). Still, it must be acknowledged that the writing process with pen and paper is essentially different from the one with a word-processor. It can be predicted, for instance, that a think-aloud methodology (the writer is asked to think aloud while typing) may slow down the speed and fluency which a writer who competently masters the word-processor can have. Also, there are idiosyncratic differences in people's capacity to engage in the two tasks simultaneously. Anderson & O'Hagan (1989, 116) regard think-aloud protocols extrinsic to the task and slightly unnatural when compared to videotaping pairs or small groups of students using the computer together and then analysing their dialogue. Research methods that emulate the writing process should therefore be adapted to the new possibilities provided by the new technology. One means would be to use a program that registers all the keys pressed on the keyboard. In that case it would be possible afterwards to analyse the changes the writer has made in his text during the process. Wilkinson (1983, 219—232), for instance, depicts one such program (The Writer's Assistant). No such program was used in the present research, however.

When a textual analysis is designed concerning ethnographically gathered data, one of the most used indices is a T-unit. Rousseau & Tam (1989, 50), basing their definition on Hunt (1965) and Bartholomae (1980), define a T-unit as an independent clause including any dependent clauses attached to or embedded in it and contend that it is a commonly accepted measure of syntactic complexity in writing. Later research, however, has pointed out that syntactic complexity, earlier thought to indicate high quality in a written product, is questionable (cf. e.g., Péry-Woodley 1991, 72). In Rousseau & Tam (1989), also other ideas for dependent measures (composition length, spelling errors, substitutions) were used. A number of other researchers (cf. e.g., Cooper & Odell 1977;

Myers 1985) have expressed ideas of how to analyse sentences in a quantitative way.

In the present study, these kinds of indices will not be used for a variety of reasons. For instance, the composition length cannot be any decisive factor, as senior secondary school students are taught to write essays of certain length. Even if these restrictions do not necessarily hold regarding computer-mediated communication and the use of e-mail, they may have an indirect influence on the length of the e-mails the students wrote. Another consideration is that insofar as international communications networks and e-mail were a technological innovation in FL classrooms—neither the participating teachers nor the students involved were particularly familiar with these media in advance, this may also have affected their writing lengthwise. Besides, T-units and similar calculations are normally used when two writing methods or approaches are compared to one another. This viewpoint resembles a comparative research perspective, which was criticised in Tella (1991, 36–37) on the basis of earlier research findings. It would now be illogical to start using these kinds of quantitative measures in order to illustrate the character of computer-mediated communication experienced during fieldwork.

In my opinion, a more realistic and better approach is to analyse the language part of e-mail correspondence from other angles, such as textual superstructure, as defined above. An analysis resembling or approaching a conversational analysis would probably allow a deeper insight into the structures of this new telematic communication. It would seem appropriate to analyse different addresses, topical references, and ways messages are linked together (e.g., any possible adjacency pairs as links).

As computer-mediated communication can take place either on-line or off-line, the possible temporal delay may also affect the form of the messages. The temporal lag between receiving a message and sending one can be very short or rather long. It would seem important to analyse how this temporal lag was taken into account if at all. Another difference between computer-mediated communication and a face-to-face conversation lies in the use (or non-use) of non-verbal communication. The analysis will have to look into possible ways of written "vocalisations" used to compensate for the absence of this kind of communication. One particular case could be the use of names (addressing one another by first name) as a substitute of physical interaction. On the other hand, contextualism, highlighting the textual superstructure or its modi-

fications, such as the absence of topic sentences, could be more accentuated (cf. e.g., Myers 1985).

In conclusion, the research method is based on an ethnographic approach, which partly determines the data analysing techniques to be used. Prior experience from computer-assisted language learning research gives reason to expect that this approach is worth a try in a natural school context. The ethnographic techniques are supported by a thematic and textual analysis of themes and topics as well as of language. The communicative function of e-mail correspondence is equally taken into consideration. As e-mail communication is believed to resemble spoken communication, special attention is paid to possible written "vocalisations", by looking at written products as *parole*, not simply as products referring to *langue*. Furthermore, writing and reading are included in the analysis, by regarding them as starting-points that complement each other in an interactive process such as e-mail communication.

6. Research Problems

The following research problems are connected to the theoretical questions discussed in the earlier chapters of this report and to the research purposes formulated at the beginning of the report. The main aim of this research stage is to explicate the contents, topics, and themes discussed in data gathered during the fieldwork period (1989–1990), and, on the other hand, to analyse the textual superstructure of computer-mediated communication as carried out on international communications networks through e-mail.

6.1. Contents, Themes, and Topics

The purpose of this research report is to analyse the themes and topics dealt with, and to try to understand in what context these themes have arisen and why, and, finally, how they are related to the official curriculum. Themes and topics can be approached from various viewpoints, such as the communicator's—or more generally speaking—man's personal level, man's nearby surroundings, things taught at school—which, incidentally, form just one level—and the outside world. The themes specified in the national FL curriculum form one block, which, in the final analysis, is not necessarily central and should not be used as a compulsory starting point. However, it is natural to compare the themes and topics dealt with in this study with the themes specified in the official curriculum in the Finnish senior secondary schools. The starting point for the analysis is preferably an internal needs analysis made by the students and their teachers: what do people want to talk about in general?

One might expect that the ideas of the teachers involved in the study are more or less geared towards the themes and topics they consider relevant from the point of view of the course(s) being studied. The teachers are also well informed of the fact that while there are a large number of themes specified in the curriculum, they are merely suggestions meant to help the teachers, not to restrict their activities or restrict their imagination. On the other hand, the students are expected to have themes and topics of their own, which they would like to discuss if only they get the chance to do so. It is also important to assess which themes benefited from being discussed through e-mail, i.e., what sort of themes seem to suit computer-mediated communication and e-mail. The question of

time is also central. If it is accepted that e-mail communication can be fast, does this change the way or the time when particular themes can be handled? In general, current affairs—matters which are topical and in the news—also need to be paid attention to. A culture and society specific viewpoint must also be taken into consideration.

This problem area, concerning themes and topics (focusing the subject matter, organising, highlighting) to be dealt with, calls for a situational analysis by distinguishing language use in formal teaching contexts (in classrooms in particular) from natural contexts ("real life" or naturalistic domains). This problem area will also concern the questions the foreign partner schools may pose about subject matter, culture or language, and the types of assignments they may give to their Finnish partner schools, and vice versa. Besides, as stated in the theoretical framework of this study, each genuine text is supposed to have a communicative purpose of its own, to be respected when dealing with the text.

This problem area can be summarised in the following research questions:

- By whom and in what way were the themes and topics dealt with initiated? Were they discussed repeatedly or did they represent once-only or occasional appearances? Was dealing with certain themes and topics completed or left unfinished? Were there themes or topics only suggested but not discussed or elaborated at all?
- How did the themes and topics dealt with correspond to the contents set in the official foreign language curriculum? What sort of themes and topics turned up beyond the scope of the official curriculum?
- In what way were the themes and topics dealt with analogous or in harmony with more general principles of computer-mediated communication and the possibilities offered by e-mail?
- What sort of themes and topics were intended mainly for the teachers?

6.2. Language of E-Mail Communication

Another research problem area of this report will deal with language characteristics or changes in language code, influenced by default by communication carried on through electronic mail on international communications networks.

It must be acknowledged that changes in learners' language code are also affected by time and, accordingly, by a number of other intervening variables not built in the research design (further teaching of English, music videos students watch at home, pop songs they listen to, cinema, etc.).

The differences between object language, discourse language, and metalanguage (cf. Hellgren 1982, 44) are connected to the concept of foreign language proficiency. Although computer-mediated communication can directly affect the object language of the students, the main influence will be likely to come out at inter-sentential or discourse levels, not at the clause level only. The whole message is more important than the separate units it consists of. E-mail messages can also be used for metalinguistic purposes if language comments, for instance, are deliberately asked for. This would only be natural as the research setting included both native and non-native speakers of English and much of the communication was directed by teachers of English.

Answers will be searched for the following research questions:

- What sort of characteristics describe the superstructure of e-mail messages? How complete or elliptical is the sentence structure used in e-mail communication?
- To what extent does the level of formality/informality vary in *on-line* e-mail communication in comparison with *off-line* (word-processed or premade) e-mail communication?
- What sort of writing modes and language registers can be found in e-mail communication?
- How is the lack of the support of non-verbal language cues taken into account in e-mail communication?
- What is the teacher's role as far as correcting students' language errors and mistakes is concerned? Are language mistakes allowed or are they strictly corrected? Does the teacher "censor" any of the students' contributions?
- What sort of measures helped students increase their metalinguistic awareness of the target language?

The research problems will be answered by analysing the data gathered during the fieldwork period of the research project (November 1989—May 1990). The fieldwork period included three Finnish senior secondary schools¹ (later called Schools A, B, and C),

¹ The privacy of the Finnish portrayants (schools, teachers, and students) is ensured by using pseudonyms throughout this report (the use of pseudo-

four teachers of English (later called Teachers A, B, C1, and C2), and 134 students from six Form 1 or Form 2 classes). The foreign participants—either teachers, students or researchers—came from nine different countries (Britain, the USA, Austria, Canada, the former German Democratic Republic, the former Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Iceland, and Sweden). The participating schools, teachers, and the main e-mail links established for the fieldwork period were delineated in the first report of the project (Tella 1991).

nyms, cf. e.g., Armstrong 1987, 27–28). The foreign participants will be named directly in order to enhance authenticity. No negative answers were given to my original request concerning whether their names and contributions could be cited in the reports of this research project.

7. Results and Interpretations

7.1. Contents, Themes, and Topics

In this chapter it will be analysed in what way and what kind of themes and topics were set, met, and closed. The choice of the subject matter (themes and topics) was deliberately left open for the participating teachers and students to make. The foreign teachers in particular found it appropriate to identify certain general themes to start with, in order to accommodate e-mail to their language classrooms. After some initial exchange of e-mails, further suggestions were made by the Finnish participants. The main choices were discussed in detail in Tella (1991, 97—103) in connection with goal setting and planning. In the following, only a few of these starting points will be referred to; instead, more focus will be given to analysing different themes in order to be able to answer the research questions connected to the first research problem area.

Certain "external" criteria held during the whole of fieldwork. First, on the Finnish side, after the initial introductory phase, some emphasis was laid on implementing the themes suggested in the official curriculum (Anon. 1985). The time of the year was also taken into account. Before and around Christmas, it was more than natural to compare ways how Christmas was celebrated in Britain and in Finland. On February 14th, St. Valentine's Day was celebrated by exchanging some e-mails, etc.

It became apparent quite soon that some themes and topics arose from mutual interest in a number of things, such as school going rituals, young people's hobbies and ways of spending their free time. One unexpected stream of themes arose when the participants—even if it was not quite evident and obvious during the fieldwork period itself—realised that Eastern Europe was about to experience drastic changes in her political and social structures. The fall of the Berlin Wall, among the very first signs, was indisputable evidence of a new era which continued to strengthen and whose climax took place soon after the end of the fieldwork period.

7.1.1. How Teachers Started—and Ended

The four Finnish teachers had a common starting point, viz. a partner school teacher with some students in Britain. However, only Teacher C2 went through the fieldwork period exclusively with her partner school teacher. Teacher A had a vigorous restart with a

couple of US schools towards the end of the fieldwork period. Teacher B made extra use of the Global Village contributions forwarded to him. Teacher C1 had the most extensive approach. He exchanged letters and ideas first with his English partner school, but when this link dried up, more increasingly with the Global Village schools and teachers all over the world. A few examples will be shown in order to give a general outline of the fieldwork period.

Teacher A

Mr Mundt, Teacher A's British partner teacher, started with a list of what his students had already done for their English project and which could be used in the e-mail project:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)¹
From: YSO007 Delivered: Tue 21-Nov-89 19:47 Sys 10001 (47)
Subject: (...) S S School (...)

Do be patient with your students because I have found that their messages do take some time to prepare. They have lessons on a Monday and a Thursday and they will send a letter to you after school so you should receive information by the next day. My students have been preparing information on:

- Presentation of class, school, local surroundings
- A day in the life of a typical young person.
- Newspaper production—items of news
- A cookery book
- An environment project
- Information about Christmas
- Fairy or traditional stories.

I hope that my students will use maps, make newspapers, booklets, folders, pamphlets. Copies of these we could send to you after the project ends.

I also hope that 'our' students can get personal penfriends as a result of their messages. (...)

Best wishes

Paul Mundt

Head of English, Tanbridge House School, 21/11/89"

Teacher A's first reply to Mr Mundt concerned the first topics (class, school, city, and Finland) and the constellation of her students. As explained in Tella (1991), this link became almost unidi-

¹ TBX850 (and later YNP010) refers to my e-mail account. The main e-mail accounts of foreign partner schools are enumerated in Tella (1991, 59).

rectional (Finland -> Britain) after two months of mutually active co-operation, so other links had to be searched for. What inspired the students, Teacher A, and even the headteacher of School A, was the fact that Teacher A's two classes also got letters from New York (see student profiles in Chapter 7.1.2). After having been briefed in their own classroom, Teacher A's students took turns in typing their contributions on a diskette either in the teachers' room, in the computer lab, or in the back room of the language lab. Given that the students could use several computers in several rooms, the whole situation was lively indeed. In a way, Boyd's (1987) vision of new educational opportunities through computer-mediated communications systems came true in School A regarding the physical flexibility offered by computer-mediated communications systems, as the class activities were distributed into various places while everybody was still working for a common good.

Teacher B

In his reply to my initial request, Mr Lawrence, Teacher B's British partner school teacher, roughly outlined the topics he thought could be relevant to start with:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: SCHOOLS.IT.UNIT (YOJ002) Delivered: Tue 12-Dec-89 21:00
Sys 1000)

Subject: Finland Language Project (...)

We should be very interested in learning a little about the students and their work at the University, and you might feel it appropriate to link some of them directly with a partner in England. You might like to let us know how you set about learning English, and we might discuss approaches to Modern Language teaching in general.

In addition to the discussion of literature which I mentioned earlier, we might look at our attitudes towards recent events in Europe, and how our newspapers report them.

You might want to send us some creative work—stories, poems or articles in English for us to review. We have an Electronic Mail Magazine, for example, in Kingston, set up very recently as a forum for writing across the Borough, and it would be wonderful if you could contribute to this. We should, of course, send you a copy of the magazine!

I believe that the possibilities of Electronic Mail are truly limitless, and that if we apply ourselves creatively to developing it as a resource, then the benefits to students across the world will be of incalculable value. (...)"

Teacher B had a class meeting on January 17th, 1990, in order to negotiate the proper themes with his students. He first recapitulated the themes which would arise from the textbook (Wings 5) used in his class:

"Course contents

- 1 Texts
- 1B Living in the Past
- 2B Some Crazy Inventions
- 2E Michael Faraday
- 3C Preventive Medicine
- 4B Do You Believe in Astrology
- 5B Home Computers
- 6B Science and War"

(A fieldnote in School B on Jan. 17th, 1990)

Teacher B introduced the e-mail project, by first presenting what the English party had proposed and then went on to discuss his own ideas of work. A quote from the fieldnotes also reveals the students' initial comments:

"Suggested themes or topics:

- reading a novel together with the partner school in Britain (A slight negative sigh from the students' side)
- exchanging folk tales and superstitions (The teacher said this would require some translation)
- latest events in Europe and how they are reported in the press (According to the teacher, his students were a bit handicapped in comparison with the English, as they received no newspaper in English)
- essays, poems or articles to be checked by the English

Suggestions for the division of work:

- division into groups, perhaps 3—4 groups (Teacher: people of the 'same flock')
- each group would have a theme of its own, as well as its way of replying, examples of groupings:

a. letter exchanging—personal penpal, possibly the English could be asked to proofread [the Finnish contributions] and to suggest modifications regarding the use of English (Interested silence when this was presented; however, no support when asked later)

b. novels

(Teacher's joke, 'I don't mean the Gypsies'¹, was well received by the students—no support, however, when asked later)

¹ The Finnish word *romaani* means either a novel or a Gypsy.

c. folktales, superstitions (No support when asked later)

d. textbook—thinking about and exchanging ideas based on some themes occurring in the class textbook
(Jocular comment by a boy: '*Seuraava jokeri*' [Next joker]. Seven boys supported this idea when asked later.)

e. comparison of a number of features of both societies, e.g., sports; going to school; social welfare system; spending one's freetime in general, FL education; visions for the future; attitudes towards immigrants, refugees, and minorities; what is good or bad in Finland or in England; what's wrong in the school system, etc.
(Well received by the majority of the students—two groups formed later.)

f. how certain universal events are reported in the press—comparisons between England and Finland (This was later modified into a school magazine materials production group, consisting of five girls.)" (A fieldnote in School B on Jan. 17th, 1990)

The themes suggested were easily linked to the themes of the period just being studied. The planning too went quite well. The teacher asked the students to group into small groups of some 6–8 students. He intended to have four groups, which also came about accordingly. Students' further ideas were asked for but none were presented right away. The students seemed quite happy about the ideas put forward by Teacher B. As mentioned earlier, the topicalisation hypothesis (Ellis 1990, 123–124) presumes not all themes should be nominated by the teacher, as students would benefit from themes they have chosen themselves. It seemed that Teacher B's students, however, did not want to nominate extra themes of their own. This was perhaps due to the fact that the themes gathered from the textbook together with the themes Teacher B had brain-stormed for his class, obviously already covered a large domain of interest areas and the students might have wanted some more time to think them over. I also wondered whether the students had adopted their role as students too well, not using their right to nominate new topics they would feel comfortable to talk about. However, while Teacher B was away for a few minutes, Group B (consisting of girls with the general task of comparisons) suddenly started brain-storming, so at least their ideational processes (Pontecorvo & Paoletti 1991) had just been temporarily hampered. They had time to discuss quite a range of extra topics even before Teacher B came back and started the planning together. Here are the general schedules of the four groups drawn during the lesson:

"Group 1 (6 boys)—theme: Comparisons

1. Spending one's free time
2. Prices of goods
3. Music business
4. The young and drugs
5. Aids [in brackets and struck-thru by one of the boys: *turvaseksi* i.e., safe sex]

Group 2 (8 girls)—theme: Comparisons

[The girls thought of dividing themselves into dyads]

- 1st lesson: free time: art (music)
 2nd lesson: free time: sport
 3rd lesson: studying foreign languages
 4th lesson: attitudes towards minorities
 5th lesson: attitudes towards sex and going steady [struck-thru: drugs]
 6th lesson: abuse of alcohol and drugs
 7th lesson: free time
 8th lesson: extra: (pollution)
 [the last theme was provoked by a brochure on the wall near the group, whose title was: *A-saasteet...*]

Group 3—A School Magazine

[a girl of an artistic character, as the teacher commented; another girl, a star pupil, comment by the teacher; three other girls]

Main topic: a never-ending story, to be written in turn by both parties. The story should be absurd, with a lot of imagination.

[The group originally suggested they interrupt their story in a very exciting point such as: And then the door opened... The teacher was worried about the English side—what would they contribute to us if the Finnish side only writes. Afterwards, we agreed that the teacher would ask Mr Williams to have a special group in Britain to answer the story quickly so that it would not take too long to wait for the next episode. The group could meanwhile write poems, etc. to be sent to the English newspaper.]

Secondary topics: Poems, etc.

Group 4 (7 boys)—themes based on textbook material

1. Increasing juvenile crime
2. Religion
3. Communications
4. Health" (A fieldnote in School B on Jan. 17th, 1990)

The planning was done efficiently. A few days later Teacher B sent an e-mail to Britain in order to inform Mr Lawrence of the choice of the themes and a slightly delayed copy to me:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: School B Delivered: Sun 21-Jan-90 20:40 Sys 10001)
Subject: Plans (...)

Thank you very much for your letter of January 12th. I quite agree that it's most important to get started with the writing immediately. By the way, the boys-only Tiffin School reminds me of the time when I was a pupil in a similar Finnish school back in the 1960s. To my mind that sort of school might even now have its own advantages and definitely an atmosphere that today's mixed Finnish schools lack. It may, however, very well happen that my pupils disagree with me most strongly on this point. Nevertheless, I do think this is an excellent subject for student discussion. (...)

Last Wednesday's lesson was spent entirely on discussing the various possibilities this kind of electronic link offers and getting ourselves organized for the correspondence. What we in fact did was that the students split into four interest groups, each comprising some 7—8 students. The groups are as follows: 1. Creative writing group (as you suggested in one of your earlier letters), 2.,3. (one for the boys and the other for the girls) Comparative studies (of various aspects of British and Finnish society), 4. Textbook group—they intend to base their correspondence on the themes discussed in their English textbook.

As you certainly know from your own experience, 45 minutes is a relatively short time, considering all the reading, writing, planning, and not least because of the time the computer itself takes. Thus, I don't by any means expect every group to be able to send something to your students every time. I am not quite sure if it is even to be desired. So, we'll see. Should you want to suggest alterations, any at all, to our preliminary plans, from your point of view, please do so.

Best wishes, [Teacher B's first name]"

Some of these themes were directly related to the English courses Nos 5 and 6, i.e., Health (heart diseases, alcohol abuse, drugs, cholesterol), literature, poetry, stories, comparative studies (school systems—mixed vs. single sex schools), music, sports, such as Finnish baseball, prices, free time activities). Some of the topics in comparative studies also fell outside the scope of Courses 5 and 6. One more topic which didn't actually take shape until towards the end of the fieldwork period was translation. The Finnish texts to be translated into English were some practice material Teacher B had previously translated from original English texts (*Appendix B*).

Teacher C1

My reply (Jan. 10th, 1990) to Mr Brown cover some of the themes he suggested to Teacher C1:

"To: George Brown YLP059

Let me briefly come back to some points you raised in your previous letter.

< I was extremely interested to read your ideas for they
 < coincide closely with what we were hoping to carry out.
 < As you say the basis is an informal, friendly network of
 < parallel students. We were hoping that through this contact
 < they would gain understanding of different cultures and
 < lifestyles. Beyond this the possibilities are enormous;
 < we have had suggested appreciation of the geography of their
 < countries, swapping traditional recipes (cooking them and
 < reporting back!), economic awareness, life in schools,
 < comparison of leisure activities, and so on.

Agreed! Even if we might still be at the very beginning of a new path, it is obvious that this new medium will have a lot to give to foreign language instruction as well. (...)"

Teacher C1 also quickly reacted to the choice of themes:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Thu 18-Jan-90 13:38 Sys 12762 (3)

Subject: Answer to Mr Brown (...)

We are still working on the students' profiles. In fact, they are finished, but only on paper, because we can get to the computer class only on Monday mornings. (...) One of the aims of this e-mail project for us is to learn to use word processors and get everybody to write their messages on disks. (...)

Anyway, my students seem to be quite excited about the e-mail project and I think they appreciate the chance of real communication with English speaking youngsters. (...)

My students have also tried to brainstorm topics for further discussion between us, so let us just hope these young people will find good and interesting themes. (...)"

In March 1990, Teacher C1 was contacted by Dr Sheila Gersh from New York. This led to several letters being exchanged, especially through the Global Village network.

A feature characteristic of e-mailing was the exchange of extra favours, greetings, etc. during the whole of fieldwork. Here are a few examples concerning Teacher C1:

"To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059 Delivered: Mon 14-May-90 18:43 Sys 10001 (132)

Subject: fao Teacher C1—CHESHAM LINK (...)

For the moment I wonder if you could do us a favour? Next Monday (21st May) we are holding an 'Open Evening' when the parents are able to wander around the school to see what sort of things the students are doing. Do you think that you could send us an E-mail message to be read on that day? (...)

Hope that all is well with you and your teaching,

Kind regards, George. (...)"

The teachers' meeting seems to have been an important event as Mr Brown came back to it in an e-mail of June 20th, 1990, i.e., only after the school year was over in Finland:

To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 20-June-90 12:13 Sys 10001 (66)

Subject: Request for assistance from George Brown

Thank you very much for your E-mail, and especially the 'thoughts about HAPPINESS' by [three of your students]. The Open Evening at school was a great success. We set up (in my room!) one of the computers with a modem etc., to demonstrate an E-mail station. A print-out of your letters was mounted on magenta(!) card and displayed above the computer. Very impressive—thanks to you. (...)"

The contributions Teacher C1's students wrote were also printed in a Kingston E-mail magazine run by Teacher B's partner school teacher, Mr Williams. Teacher C1 thanked for the e-mail magazine:

To: YOJ002 (10001:YOJ002)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Wed 16-May-90 11:52 Sys 12762 (24)

Subject: K.email in Finland (...)

We were very pleased here to see that you had taken Finland as your special topic. I let my students read your magazine and all involved in e-mail here seemed to be quite happy to see that their messages had been received and responded. It was very encouraging for all of us. We also read the English contributions, which were very interesting and of course useful for us from the language learning viewpoint. (...) Thanks and best wishes (...)"

Extra favours were also asked by Terry:

To: [Global Villagers]

From: PS26 (NYE013) Delivered: Sat 17-Feb-90 19:48 Sys 134 (14)

Subject: getn conference

Dear Global Village friends,

On Tuesday and Wednesday of tis next week I will be presenting a workshop about our Global Village at a conference in New York City.

I would very much like to show how e-mail is exchanged. i realize that many of you have no school at this time (we are not so fortunate in NY), but if you receive this message please do me a favor. Please send me a short message—just stating who you are, where your school isd what you find the value of the Global Village to be. I hope that these little messages will aid in showing the benefits of international telecommunications.
Thanks a lot, Terry"

Teacher C2

The link between Teacher C2 and her British partner school teacher, Mr Milford, was established before Christmas 1989:

"From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Wed 20-Dec-89 18:40 Sys1
To: Teacher C2
Subject: Links (...)

I will arrange for some students to contact you next term. They will send some descriptions of who they are and then we will decide how we want to set up the discussions. (...)"

After the Christmas holidays, Teacher C2 anticipated the start of the mutual project:

"To: YDO076 (10001:YDO076)
From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Tue 16-Jan-90 14:27 Sys 12762 (1)
Subject: Reply to: Hello again (...)

We have written an answer to your two students and we will try to send off the answer tomorrow. We have also brainstormed on all the diverse topics we want to discuss. (...)"

Brain-storming soon took place as the following e-mail announced:

"To: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850)
From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Sun 11-Mar-90 12:26 Sys 12762 (28)
Subject: a letter from Teacher C2 (...)

My class 2A don't have English in their programme during this period (as I think I told you),so I only see them in the corridors. We will resume our studies on April 11th and we would very much like to carry on from where we left. The students collected quite a number of topics which they would like to discuss with some of your students. Is it all right if we start sending letters right away when we meet again in the English classroom. It will be easier for us to operate in the next

period as we will have access to these machines once a week for one whole lesson. (...)"

In another letter to Mr Milford, Teacher C2 underlined that not only language but other aspects of the British culture interested her:

"To: YDO076 (10001:YDO076)
From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Mon 26-Mar-90 9:18 Sys 12762 (12).
Subject: an afterthought

This is an afterthought concerning my yesterday's letter. I don't mean by any means that the sole purpose of e-mail for my pupils would be improving their English. It is, of course, for all of us to exchange ideas, widen horizons and discuss various subjects of relevance and interest. The language is only a tool with which this is executed. (...)"

Mr Milford's reply arrived somewhat delayed:

"To: Teacher C2
From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Fri 6-Apr-90
1:49 Sys 10001 (147)
Subject: Reply to News and Requests (...)

Thank you both for your recent letters and news, comments from Finland. As ever, it was a delight to receive and read.

The impending end of term has made life here become rather hectic. The last few days have seen a deluge of students arriving at the various computer terminals to word-process or desk-top-publish their A level project reports. Geography, Business Studies, Physics and Economics students all have to hand their completed documents in for assessment tomorrow. (...)

Right. There's a few things for you all to read!

All good wishes to you all.

Peter Milford"

The expansion of the network is described in detail in Tella (1991).

7.1.2. Student Profiles and Penpal Requests

Even if ordinary penpal contacts were not heartily welcomed by all the participating teachers, it was natural to first introduce oneself. The student profiles were written at the very beginning of the field-work period, in November and December 1989, in School A, and mainly in January 1990 in Schools B and C. As Teacher C1 changed groups in the middle of the spring of 1990, his new group also wrote some profiles. Teacher A received a lot of new profiles at the beginning of May 1990, as her latest links with New York schools got

established. I planned that schools would switch from a personally or interpersonally-oriented phase towards more task-oriented phases as soon as possible after completing the student profiles. This initial phase would, however, be a warm-up period, with students getting acquainted and familiar with the computer, the word-processor to be used, and, more important, receiving profiles describing their overseas partner school students. Student profiles also represented the "insider's" perspective, starting with descriptions of oneself, home, family, friends, etc. This writing assignment was not unfamiliar to the students, either, as Course 1 in Form 1 mostly concentrated on this topic. In addition, student profiles were studied on some noticeboards of Campus 2000. For practical reasons stated above, the student profiles were written and read on several occasions during the fieldwork period.

The student profiles differed in quality and in quantity. The students' age was clearly an indicator, but the contents were also influenced by what the teachers seemed to have given as instructions. Naturally, other factors counted too, e.g., the student's own wish as to how much was asked for, how much he thought would be relevant. A decisive factor was, of course, the feedback received from the partner school. Some of the correspondence showed a continuing exchange of ideas, jokes, and unexpected lines of reasoning.

The student profiles received from New York show the basic type of introducing oneself: an initial greeting (not always expressed), short identification, a few details about hobbies and school, and, finally, a wish for the recipient to reply quickly. Some also indicate curiosity concerning Finland. On the other hand, these profiles served well as a model for the Finnish students as well.

"From: S.GERSH (NYE001) Delivered: Fri 27-Apr-90 18:57 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: LETTERS FROM NY STUDENTS

I AM SHEILA GERSH, THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR. HERE ARE SOME LETTERS THAT THE NEW YORK STUDENTS WROTE. PLEASE SEND SOME TO US SOON.

My name is Angel Cabreja. I am 17 years old in the tenth grade. I also go to Geroge Washington High School what I think is the worst school. But we really like it. I would like to know more about your contry and about your school write soon.

hi, my name is Evelyn Roman and I am 14 years old. I attend GWHS. I love to listen to all kinds of music. I was born in New York City. Sorry, I did not write more.

Dear Student My name is Wendy Pereyra. I am 15 years. I like to hear music like house, rap, heavy music. Sometimes I feel like going to the park and walk for an hour. I like to read. Tell me what do you like and what do you like to do. I like baseball also. do you? Please write soon. (...)"

Some profiles were much more personal, giving a sharper image of the person in question:

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 20:46 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: stories from Brandeis

THE UNKNOWN SECRETS IN THE MASTER'S LIFE

You must be wondering why people call me the Master. I wish I could tell you, but it's kind of personal. Let me just continue by telling you that my real name is Hector Santana and I was born in the Dominican Republic. I'm seventeen years old and I'm Hispanic. I spent the first nine years of my life over there, but my parents decided to bring me to the United States with them. I must say that things were difficult for me at first because I didn't know English and I didn't have any friends, but as time went by I learned the language and I started making friends. As you can see I've made it through high school and I'm starting college on June 27. I'm very excited about it and a little bit nervous too. I hope that I don't have any problems in college in the years to come. (...)"

The student replies from School A show that the students often used the original letters as models. However, the Finnish e-mails are more formal concerning letter writing formulae, i.e. the initial greeting as well as the ending are more strictly *comme il faut*. Not many Finnish students acknowledge or try to build upon the information provided by the American students, except the name of the sender. As the number of students differed in the New York classes when compared to Teacher A's classes, some students could even get several replies.

"From: S.GERSH (NYE001) Delivered: Fri 27-Apr-90 18:57 Sys 134
To: Teacher A (...)

My name is Ivelisse Duran and I am a girl. I am 16 and attend George Washington High School. My favorite hobbies are: to listen to music, any type, talk on the telephone, play softball, party all night and love

to go to the movies on Saturday. What do you do for fun. please write soon."

"To: NYE001 (134:NYE001)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 14:41 Sys 12762 0
Subject: Hi from (...)

Hi Ivelisse,
We are two seventeen-year-old girls from (...) High School. We also like parties and talking on the telephone. We spend our free-time with friends. In summer we usually lie on the beach.
What kind of family do you have? What is the place where you live like? We live in the country.
We also like going to the movies and we like comedies.
Please reply soon
with love, H(...) and J(...)"

"From: S.GERSH (NYE001) Delivered: Fri 27-Apr-90 18:57 Sys 134
To: Teacher A

Hi, my name is Elivis Ferrer. I am 16 years old. I go to George Washington High School. My favorite sport is basket-ball. I was born in New York and my parents were born in The Dominican Republic. My favorite rappers are: MCHV, & DJ MCM, DELA SOUL, a quest to El-EL ASee ya. please write soon."

"To: NYE001 (143:NYE001)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Thu 24-May-90 11:43 Sys 12762 (51)
Subject: answers from (...)

Hi Elvis²
We are two girls from Finland. Our names are M(...) and A(...). We study at (...) High School. We both are 17 years old. We are very interested in sport. Tell us about your school. What subjects do you study at school? What kind of family do you have? Do you have any other hobbies than basketball? Our summer holiday begins on the 1st of June. You see, it's not very far away. We are going to work the whole holiday and of course just relax and tan ourselves. Write soon!
With love, M(...) and A(...)"

"From: S.GERSH (NYE001) Delivered: Fri 27-Apr-90 18:57 Sys 134
To: Teacher A

My name is Chris Triantos and I am 15 years old. I go to George Wash-

¹ This and some other letters were falsely addressed: instead of 143, the system prefix should have been 134. The error was soon discovered and the letters were resent to the US school.

² The Finnish girls correctly assumed that this boy had just misprinted his first name (Elvis instead of Elivis).

ington HS and I am in the ninth grade. My favorite sport is basketball. My favorite team in the NBA is the NY Knick but they are going to get swept in the first round against the Boston Celtics. My favorite music is rap music. Pleasewrite back soon."

"To: NYE001 (143:NYE001)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Thu 24-May-90 11:43 Sys 12762 (51)

Subject: answers from (...)

Hi Chris

Thank you for your letter. We are three boys from Finland. Our names are M(...), L(...) and J(...). L(...) and J(...) are 17 years old. M(...) is 16. Our hobbies are icehockey and computers. We think the best icehockey team is the Edmonton Oilers. Do you know Jari Kurri, Mark Messier, Esa Tikkanen and Glen Andersson? What do you think, which team will win the Stanley Cup? We think the best basketball team is the Los Angeles Lakers. And the best player is Michael Jordan. We listen to popmusic. Have you got a car? M(...)'s parents have a Volvo and a Ford. L(...)'s parents have a Ford and a Fiat. J(...)'s parents have a Mazda and a Volvo and a Peugeot. We get the driver licence when we are 18 years old. Here it's nice weather now about +20 celcius and the sun is shining. Please write back soon!

Yours M(...),J(...) and L(...)."

At their best, the student profiles provided the Finnish students with excellent opportunities to heighten their awareness of crosscultural differences. The boys' mentions of the number of cars per family may indicate that they were conscious of the fact that an average US family has two cars and they wanted to compare these figures with Finnish ones. The American letters also often revealed the fact that the students' background was not necessarily that of a "white" American or, generally speaking, a Caucasian. It was enlightening for the Finnish students to actually realise that the US classes consisted of crosscultural and multiracial components. In the following, the Finnish girl also aptly utilises the information given in the letter of Mohammad Javeid:

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Thu 10-May-90 14:55 Sys 134

To: Teacher A

Subject: stories from Brandeis

My name is Mohammad Javeid. I was born in India but I am a Pakistani. I am an 18 year old young man. I am a cool minded person. I am a little shy but gradually I am bold. I am a senior and will graduate in January 1991.

My ambition is to become an architect. I enjoy talking to people, listening to music, travelling and playing different games especially cricket.

I am studying in Louis D. Brandeis High School in New York. Life is very tough in New York. Every one is busy doing his/her work. USA is a nice place to live in. It is a very beautiful country."

"To: NYE018 (134:NYE018)

To: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Fri 18-May-90 10:37 Sys 12762 (27)

Subject: stories from (...)

To Mohammad Javeid

Hi, Mohammad

My name is H(...).I'm studying in (...) High School.I don't know yet what career I'll choose but I'm interested in a teacher's or a translator's work. I like to read all kinds of books,listen to music and play the electronic organ.I'm a sixteen-year-old Finnish girl. Finland is very beautiful country with thousands of lakes. Finnish men are hard-working and headstrong.Sauna is a hot place in which can have a bath.Finland is a small country (population about 5 million),but I enjoy living here.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon, H(...)"

The number of contacts between School A and New York increased rapidly and steadily towards the end of the fieldwork period. Unfortunately, the Finnish school year ends much earlier than the American one, so not all links could be used actively until the following term.

One of the benefits the students could have from the exchange of personal letters was an increased awareness of what first names were now in fashion in Britain or in the USA. Even if textbook writers usually pay close attention to the choice of first names in their texts, real life is always more complex. The Finnish students frequently asked the English and American students whether the person they were writing to was a boy or a girl. Naturally, foreign students had a lot more difficulties with the Finnish names.

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:13 Sys 12762 (2)

Subject: answers to george (...)

Dear Manever,

We just read your letter and find out that you are a very interesting person. At first we had a little problem because we didn't know if you are a boy or a girl. The reason was that your name was so unfamiliar and exciting to us. (...)

A(...) and L(...) (...)"

The Finnish students only worked in one-sex groups or dyads (Tella 1991). When answering foreign students' letters, sex barriers, however, were broken. Boys wrote to girls, and vice versa. As an example, I cite three letters exchanged between one of Mr Brown's girl students and two of Teacher C1's boys. As to style and contents, these letters differ a lot from the sound and business-like approach adopted in the New York student profiles above.

"To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)

Subject: First communications to Teacher C1 (...)

I am a totally mad, wacky girl called Joe Taylor who is sixteen years old. My chums call me Joe Smo! I have a brother called Paul, who is thirteen. He also goes to the same school as me. I live with my family in a small town in Buckinghamshire, called Chesham. It is about thirty kilometres north-west of London. Last year, I took my G.C.S.E. exams in Art and Design, Biology, Chemistry, English Language, English Literature, Food and Nutrition, French and Maths. I really enjoyed doing Art and Design and English but hated Maths. I am now in the sixth-form studying a one-year C.P.V.E. course. The subjects I am doing this year are: Art and Design (Higher Level), Business and Information Studies, Hospitality (At a local college), Photography and Travel and Tourism. After I leave school, I am going to study Art at college for two years and then hopefully go into a career in that field. In my spare time I enjoy reading, swimming and drawing. I also go Chesham Youth Club and local discos. My music interests include The Cure, Soul music, Rap, Hip Hop, Acid House and House music. I cannot stand Erasure or anything by Stock, Aitken and Waterman. I am totally crazy over a car called a Volkswagen Beetle. They're lovely !!!!! I also have two part-time jobs that earn me some pocket money. (...)"

The letter was answered by two Finnish boys:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:13 Sys 12762 (2)

Subject: answers to george (...)

Hello Joe!

Thank you for your nice letter, it was very interesting to read.

We are two handsome boys, K(...) and H(...), both 17. K(...) lives in (...), North(...), and I live in (...), West(...). (...) is the capital of Finland with approximately 500,000 inhabitants.

Although we still go to school, it is not our primary interest. If we were to decide, we would rather take a plane to Hawaii and have some good time with pretty girls.

While not in school, we often go to movies. We are also interested in sports, like golf and scuba-diving. We keep an eye on Finland's National Hockey League, our favorite team being TPS.

We are looking forward to getting our driver's licences in summer. That will certainly mean lots of FUN!

Greetings, K(...) and H(...) (...)"

Joe replied to the boys:

To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)

Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

Yo K(...) and H(...),

Thanks for your letter, you two sound like a bunch of cool guys!

My Dad is giving me some driving lessons but, I cannot start driving officially until I am seventeen. I will be seventeen in the summer. I hope to get a Volkswagen Beetle seeing as I am totally crazy about them! Which car do you want? I know what you mean about school! Although I do like it this year, it is good fun! I would much rather go to Hawaii. I'll come with you if you like!!

I do not do much sport but I do enjoy swimming. I like to go to movies, the last film I went to see at the cinema was 'The Delinquents'. I get out a lot of films on video. My favourite actor is Tom Cruise, I think he is really good looking.

I have just finished a three week work experience from school at a local print centre. It was really good fun. I didn't want to come back to school, because I was enjoying it so much.

That's all for now. Bye, Joe Smo. (...)"

A thematic analysis shows that both Joe "Smo" and the boys had read each other's letters carefully enough in order to be able to continue a coherent discussion. Joe's initial letter was in fact crowded with ideas and topics to catch; the boys' letter only dealt with some of them, though at the same time it tried to add some personal touch ("... two handsome boys"). Joe's second letter is in parallel with the boys' letter. As to thematic organisation, she has restricted the number of themes but those she deals with form a coherent continuational sequence to the boys' themes, which results in working referential continuity. The basic difference between the two parties becomes evident: Joe is keen on work experience and on part-time jobs; it seems to be part of her lifeworld. The boys appear much less mature with their juvenile suggestion of flying to Hawaii to meet some pretty girls.

As another example, four letters exchanged between one British girl (Clare) and one Finnish girl will be cited. They also show how the interval of exchange grows too long because no English

was taught during the zero (or blank) period in the Finnish girl's class (cf. also Tella 1991, 88—91). Clare's first letter was technically rather heavy to read as the lines were doubled for one reason or another. In the quotation below, the double lines are omitted after the sixth line:

To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)

Subject: First communications to Teacher C1 (...)

Hello, my name is Clare Edwards and I am 16 years old. I have an Hello, my name is Clare Edwards and I am 16 years old. I have an 18 year old brother called Chris and a 12 year old sister called 18 year old brother called Chris and a 12 year old sister called Gail. They are very annoying sometimes. We live in Chesham, Gail. They are very annoying sometimes. We live in Chesham, [double lines omitted from now on...]

Buckinghamshire which is near to London. Chesham is a small town set a valley in the Chiltern Hills.

I go to Chesham Park School and I am a sixth form student doing a CPVE course. Last year I did my GCSE's in the following subjects :- Maths, English Literature, English Language, French, Biology, Chemistry, Geography and Needlework. My favourite subjects were Biology and Chemistry. I am now studying Business and Information Studies, and Travel and Tourism. On Thursday Mornings we go to Amer-sham College. Last term I did a Motor Vehicle Maintenance course, it was good fun ! This term there was nothing that I wanted to do at college so I just study at school. When I leave school I want to be a Travel Agent or work in Travel Agency. At the moment I have a part-time job at Waitrose Supermarket. My hobbies are reading, socialising, swimming, playing pool and listening to Acid, House, Rap, Hip Hop, Soul and most other types of pop music. A few of my favourite groups are Fine Young Cannibals, Erasure, The Beatmasters, Technotronic, Double Trouble and The Rebel M.C. and Soul II Soul. (...)"

Clare's first letter includes a variety of themes, starting from personal introductions, family, and near surroundings, and advancing to her favourite school subjects. Her work experience is focused upon as well. The letter provides information about her future plans, hobbies, and musical taste. Clare's letter was replied by one of Teacher C1's girls as follows:

To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 11:57 Sys 12762 (1) (...)

Hi Clare,

My name is S(...) and I am one year older than you. I go to (...) school and I enjoy studing a lot. I do not have any particular hobbies, but I do

skiing, swimming, running and play different kinds of ball games, depending on the season. I live quite near the centre of (...) and I only have a few miles to school. I have a big brother called K(...) and wonderful parents, who I love a lot. My family means very much to me, but I spend almost all of my freetime with my friends, they also are very important to me. You told me about the music you listen to. The housemusic is not as popular in Finland as in England. I spent one and half month in England during my summer holiday last year and found out that you have different ways of dancing to different kinds of music. Anyway, I like Housemusic (including Acid, Hip Hop and so on), but I also listen to disco, heavy, hard rock, classical music and sometimes even Country. At the moment I am very keen on the music of the 60és. When you next time write me, could you please tell me about your character, friends, likes, dislikes and so on. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Love, S(...)"

The answer utilises only a few of Clare's themes. Her work experience, for instance, is completely ignored, which probably only reflects the basic difference between Mr Brown's students and those of Teacher C1. Otherwise, S(...)'s letter mixes well with the themes proposed; she for instance underlines the importance of her family and her friends. A sort of false modesty is present (no real hobbies, but a long list follows!). A comparative approach is tangible; S(...) has been to Britain; she comments on some differences and even puts forward a question on different dancing styles in Britain and in Finland. The letter ends with a triple closing ("When you next time write me...; I am looking forward...; Love,").

Clare's second letter arrived at the beginning of February. It starts in an unconventional way, with a friendly warning and a joke. Some of the ideas proposed by S(...) are continued or taken with a grain of salt (different dancing styles, in particular). She continues with her work experiences, which evidently play an important role in her life. The significance of work life, perhaps, was not fully understood by Teacher C1's students, even if some of them had part-time jobs on week-ends, for instance. Clare also introduces one new theme—food—which is elaborated and turned into a request about Finnish traditional recipes. Clare also wants to arouse discussion concerning the threat a thin ozone layer can bring about.

"To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)

Subject: Further letters from CPS students

Hi S(...),

How are you ? I,m in a very wacky mood today so beware. My totally mad friend Joe is sitting next to me being very silly (as usual)!!!! I've got a joke to tell you :- Why did the monkey fall out of the tree ? Answer :- Because it was dead!! ha ha ha! Sorry about that I will be serious now and tell you a bit more about me. I like going out with my friends and having a good time, we sometimes go to the cinema or go shopping in London. I love spending money, which is why I have never got any. I also like eating, my favourite foods are chocolate, pizza, chinese food and loads of other foods that are bad for you. What sort of food do you like? In your next letter could you please give me some traditional Finnish recipes. What is the weather like in Finland at the moment ? In England we are having very unusual weather. One day we have storms and the next day it is quite warm. I think it is due to the hole in the ozone layer. What are your views on the ozone layer being damaged?

For the past three weeks I have doing my work experience. I worked in Chesham Travel Agency. It was great fun , I really enjoyed it. I intend to have a career in Travel and Tourism. In your letter you said that you had been to England for your holiday. How does our lifestyle differ from yours?

You also said that we have very different ways of dancing. What's that supposed to mean ? !!!!

Anyway, I'll have to go now as it is nearly lunch time and I'm hungry (nothing unusual!!!!).I look forward to your next letter.

Lots of love, Clare. xxxxxxxxxxxx"

The Finnish girl S(...) starts her second letter in a much more formal way than Clare; she is clearly well taught to use polite letter formulae. The comparative touch continues; S(...) adroitly questions Clare's honest interest in Finnish recipes and refers to All Fools' Day, on which anything can happen. Several new themes turn up, such as the importance of being 18 soon. Adulthood and its joys are wittily discussed, but maybe half of it was written quite seriously. S(...) provides Clare with one more topic to discuss: the school spirit. On the whole, it can be concluded that the Finnish writer is fluent enough in her use of English. Besides, she has a variety of themes which help to continue the exchange of ideas.

S(...) wrote her answer on April 1st, but for some reason or another her letter was not sent to Britain until one and a half months later. The main problem, however, arose from the zero period, during which the Finnish class did not study English. As a practical solution to this sort of situation the teacher could perhaps act like this: during the period preceding the zero period a number of letters could be written in store. During the zero period the teacher could transmit the letters and deliver the possible answers with the aid of other teachers. Here is S(...) 's second letter:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 14-May-90 20:29 Sys 12762 (5)
Subject: A student letter from finland (...)

Hi Clare,

Thank you for you letter. I am so sorry it took this long time before I remembered to answer, you see I dont have any English lessons between end of February and middle of April. Well anyway it was very enjoyable to hear how the things are going over there. You personally seem to be a very nice person to know.

I (also) love eating: pizza (expecially homemade), toast, toast, chicken, toast and so on. In Finland we dont usually use that kind of marmalades on toast as you do. We just put some tomato, coucumber, peace of meat or ham on it, usually nothing sweet.

Are you REALLY interested in traditional Finnish food recipes?

Oh no, its the first of April. I really dont like this day. The newspapers are full of 'lies' and I dont know what or who to believe. I am sure my boyfriend finds out too many jokes to me. But...

... there IS something great in this years April.

Da-da-daa! I am going to be eighteen at 24th. I can go to the driving school and get driving licence, I am allowed to go to discos, restaurants and pubs.

Do you like studing? How is your school like? Do you have 'a good spirit' between the pupils in your clas? Have you got good parties at your school?

Write me back soon. LOVE S(...) XXX"

On the whole, the letters Teacher C1's students sent aroused some attention in Britain:

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 16-May-90 18:16 Sys 10001 (27)
Subject: FAO Teacher C1, MESSAGE FROM CHESHAM

Dear [Teacher C1]

Thanks for the quick reply—wow! I write again immediately in response to your message about the letters your group had prepared. Thanks for S(...)s letter and if there are any more we would love to have them. The CPVE group have their final assessment next Monday 21st May and they have their own letters they prepared, the replies from your pupils, plus the description of your school in their personal portfolios (a bit of evidence of at least some work they have done!). (...) I agree we will get organised for new groups—what are the ages of yours?

All the best. George."

In addition to ordinary letters received from and sent to partner school teachers and students, a number of requests for international penpals were accessible through the communications networks and their noticeboards. Other languages, such as German and French, were also searched for. Although these contacts were not utilised during fieldwork, they show the potential of international communications networks in providing new links and contacts across a number of countries.

In short, the penpal stage was meant to be just a prelude to dealing with other themes and topics. In practice, however, it did mean more than that. It provided the students and their teachers with a lot of modern vocabulary, new ideas of what was topical in foreign students' minds. The student profiles comprised a surprisingly rich and versatile repository of language material to be used in FL teaching.

7.1.3. Near Surroundings

7.1.3.1. School

After the student profiles, or in connection with them, many students—both Finnish and foreign—wrote something about their own school. What will be looked at in these descriptions is the level of pure description vs. analysis or personal opinions. What also counts are the facts that are missing—not only what is said is important but also what is *not* expressed at all. From the point of view of exchanging ideas, one is prone to ask whether or how these descriptions were used by the recipients. Was there any continuation or were these descriptions just once-only material?

School A was depicted in one of the very first letters like this:

"24.11.89 [to 10001:YSO007] (...)

Our School

Our school was built four years ago. It's a modern and very beautiful school. It has two floors. There are four classrooms, a library and the teachers' room upstairs. Another four classrooms, the dining room and the auditorium are downstairs.

There are 171 pupils, and we have nice teachers. We have also green plants and paintings here. The school lies in the centre of (...) close to other schools. (...)"

The description is sound, with short sentences, but does not express much. Utterances like "we have nice teachers" are semantically void. The description is, however, analogous with the one received from Teacher A's British partner school (see Tella 1991, 70).

Teacher B's partner teacher first transmitted the Tiffin Boys' School descriptions, with some interesting details. The boys depicted their House System rather thoroughly:

"To: Teacher B
From: SCHOOLS.IT.UNIT (YOJ002) Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 14:51 Sys 10001)
Subject: Message and files from England (...)

We go to Tiffin School in Kingston. Kingston is quite near Central London. On Tuesday, we have games, which include rugby and cricket. We both dislike football, because we have no ability to play it. Our favourite lesson is Computer Studies, but we also like Technology.

Most of our teachers are strict.

We both travel to school by bus. We have a uniform which includes a red and blue blazer, tie and jumper.

The school is divided into a house system, where each boy belongs to a group that competes in sporting and academic events, against other similar groups.

The Tiffin School House System.

In our school, we have six different Houses. The House competition is an important part of our school life, as it tries to involve everyone in the school, in something they enjoy. The six Houses are named after famous English men. The Houses are :- Kingsley-Montgomery, Livingstone, Drake, Churchill-Gordon, Scott and Raleigh.

We usually have competitions between the Houses such as:- Rugby, Cricket, General Knowledge, Football, Rowing, Swimming, Chess, Public Speaking, Tennis, Table-Tennis, Athletics, Drama and Singing. Every fortnight we have House meetings, where we discuss the activities which have occurred over the fortnight. These House meetings are usually not very exciting if someone isn't involved with the things mentioned. We also think about the activities that are going to happen quite soon. There is a House Master, who is in charge of his own House and tells us about the results. (...)"

Descriptions of School B were prepared somewhat earlier but transmitted to Britain on the same day as the Tiffin Boys' description arrived.

"To: YOJ002
From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 16:09 Sys 10001)
Subject: Schools2

Our opinions about our school:

We have only mixed schools here in Finland. In our opinion it's good because we have always got well along with the opposite sex. We think that separate schools would be very isolated and too protective. Differences between men and women would come out too strong.

We like our school, there are many different age groups. Here are also extra courses, which are meant for both boys and girls. Art and music courses are some of the most popular ones.

An ordinary school day lasts about 7 hours. It includes a 15 minutes breaks and half an hour lunch time. Unlike you, we get our lunch at school. It's variable warm dinner with salad, bread and milk.

In physical education we are however separated. It's good, because boys rather play basketball, than gymnastics like girls. We can go swimming, shooting, riding or anywhere we want.

Most of the school subjects are obligatory for example chemistry, history and Swedish. We have still few voluntary subjects like Germany, French and physic.

We like our school and we would like to hear something about your school system.

Some people say that our school is good because we are part of a national project run by the National Board of Schools concerning computer based education. So we use computers almost in every subject. For example in geography lesson we have been studying action of volcanos. We think this computer training is useful because in future everybody has to know how to use them. (...)"

The description is not a direct reply to the Tiffin Boys' School but it answers the question—already asked earlier—about Finnish students' opinion on boys' or girls' schools. This school description is fairly informative, and it also takes a comparative look at the English and Finnish systems (free lunches, for instance). It also shows willingness to continue the conversation about the school system ("... we would like to hear something about your school system"). Also, the school's position as one of the experimenting schools is—rather proudly—pointed out. The description gets more depth from the last statement, which turns the stream of ideas towards future needs. Besides, the students' arguments are motivated, not only stated.

Another school description received by School B was sent from the Coombe Girls' School. This report, written by younger students than those in School B, mainly consisted of short lists, but also included a merit system unknown to the Finnish students:

"From: COOMBE.GIRLS.ISM (YOJ007) Delivered: Wed 7-Mar-90
14:59 GMT Sys 11
To: School B (...)

Houses at Coombe Girls.

=====

Each year is divided into 6 groups.

The school goes upto the sixth form.

The houses we have are called

Neptune, God of sea
 Venus, Goddess of beauty and love
 Mars, God of war
 Saturn, God of farming
 Jupiter, King of Gods
 Mercury, Messenger of Gods (...)

We have a time table in our pupil diaries, every day, and the subjects are:

ART, CCS, RELIGION, SCIENCE, ENGLISH, MATHS, MODERN
 LANGUAGES, TECHNOLOGY, P.E., MUSIC, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY,
 AND DRAMA (...)

We learn three languages, they are :
 SPANISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN (...)
 Uniform.

=====

What we wear in Coombe Girls for our uniform is a green jumper,
 THE MERIT NOTE SYSTEM.

In our school we have a merit system. We have merit notes and merit points. You have to get a total of 5 merit points before you can get a merit note. You can be given these for being helpful or for good work in a certain subject.

Once the merit note has been written out by the teacher concerned she signs it and dates it and then the pupil takes it and puts it outside the headteacher's office and then she signs it.

When the pupil has been to collect it she takes it for her tutor to sign. At the end of the term the head of year counts up each girl's merit notes and the girl who has the most merit notes in her tutor group is presented with a certificate of merit.

I think that this is a good system because it is fair and it makes some people work harder! (...)"

Teacher C1's English partner school teacher, Mr Brown, described his school in the following way:

"To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059

Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)

Subject: First communications to Teacher C1 (...)

CHESHAM PARK SCHOOL

Our school motto is 'Commitment, Care, Community'. It is our aim to create a happy and well-ordered school community in which students are encouraged to be courteous and considerate to others. We aim to help students develop an awareness and appreciation of religious and moral values, an understanding of, and respect for, other cultures so that they can appreciate the rights of all individuals and their interdependence in groups and as nations.

Chesham Park School was founded in September 1988 from the amalgamation of two single sex schools. Buckinghamshire has a selective system of education in this part of the country. Children at 12+ are

placed in 'Grammar' or 'Upper' schools. Chesham Park is a 12 to 17 Upper School. We currently have 570 pupils on roll.

The school will only occupy one of the former two school sites and at this stage in our development we are occupying the 'wrong' site while building work is carried out on the chosen site. In February we are faced with the 'big move' onto the new premises. Chesham itself is a small town (population circa 23,000) at one end of the Metropolitan Line, part of the London Underground railway network. Housing is not cheap in Chesham, mainly because people can commute to work in London from living in a pleasant, rural area. (...)"

School C was introduced by three students of Teacher C1, one girl and two boys. The beginning, formal and apologetic, may well reflect the teaching traditions in Finnish senior secondary school composition practice. It is not, of course, out of place here even if this kind of style may resemble traditional letter writing more than the style usually preferred in e-mails.

"To: 10001:YLP059

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Sun 14-Jan-90 18:28 Sys 12762)

Subject: School information to Mr Brown

Hello,

We would like to tell you a few things about our school that you perhaps want to know. Although we have now been learning English for over 8 years, some errors may still occur. We hope you will get the point anyway.

Our school is called (...) School (...). Our school was founded in 1869 as a girls' school. The present school building was completed in 1969 and then the first boys moved in. (...)

We are now going to Senior Secondary School, which lasts 3 years. This prepares us for university level studies. Senior secondary school is optional, so instead we could go to work or to trade school.

The only expenses for us, however, are our books, which we have to buy ourselves. And we get a free warm meal every day, for example. We don't wear school uniforms, do you?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes, M(...), K(...) and H(...)"

Teacher C2's students also described School C.

"To: TELLA.SEPPÖ (TBX850)

From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 14:13 Sys 12762 (341)

Subject: Finnish Newsletter (...)

Hi! We are two girls from (...) and our names are G(...) & S(...). We are 17 years old. We would like to tell you about Finnish school [from] the point of view of a Senior Secondary School student. Our school is called (...) but the official name is (...). It contains both Upper Compre-

hensive School and Senior Secondary School. There are about 450 pupils and 80 teachers both qualified and unqualified. And now to the business...

...so. We have a lot of subjects both compulsory and voluntary. Compulsory subjects are more difficult and our timetable consists of most of them (It's a pity!). And then we have to choose some voluntary subjects to get the number of hours required.

The obligatory subjects are history, Finnish, religion, geography, biology, A and B language (English, German, Swedish), music or art and math (short or extensive). Voluntary subjects such as C and D languages (Spanish, French, German, English, Russian, Latin), physics (short or extensive), philosophy, psychology. (...)

Schooldays are quite long but that depends on what you have chosen. Usually the day begins at 8 and sometimes at 9 (too seldom) and ends at 14 or at 15. The common lunch is at 10.45–11.15. Between every lesson there is a 15-minute break (during that time we usually do our homework!!!). The best break is from 12.00 to 12.30. The nearest shop is popular and it's called Valintatalo (Selection House in English). Our 'smokingroom' is in the backyard because it isn't allowed to smoke inside the building.

Sorry we have to stop our stories now because the lesson is going to end soon and then we both have a test in German (we haven't read too much for it?????). We hope that the text wasn't too boring. The bell rings so....

.....BYE, BYE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

P.S Don't take everything too seriously!!! (...)"

This description is more personal than the one about School A. In addition, the two writers have tried to transmit their casual way of looking at things by adding extra punctuation. The description is also made more vivid by student-to-student "confessions", e.g., the humorous mentioning of students' "smokingroom". As this description gives a lot of information on Finnish school subjects, the length of school days, etc., it could have served as a spring-board for further exchange of e-mails about this topic. However, the writers did not make any direct questions to the British students or comparisons between the two countries.

The general theme of schools was enriched by a number of other contributions accessible to all Finnish participants. Mr Leigh, for instance, wittily compared school conditions in Britain and in some Scandinavian countries:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Mon 12-Feb-90 10:57 Sys 10001 (9)

Subject: Reply to: Reply to: Response to Seppo's words (...)

Just glanced at interesting article in today's times which seems to be claiming that our Victorian schools with outside toilets and chronic under-resourcing are being looked at by the well-funded, modern and child orientated kindergartens and young people's schools in Denmark.

One of our 'imaginative' education ministers is trying to explain how we are better off without books and equipment and that there is something character building about going to the toilet in the rain! (...) Mustn't rush - Tony"

In their profiles, US students in particular epitomised their feelings towards their school, often in contradictory terms:

"From: S.GERSH (NYE001) Delivered: Fri 27-Apr-90 18:57 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: LETTERS FROM NY STUDENTS (...)
My name is Angel Cabreja. (...) I also go to George Washington High School what I think is the worst school. But we really like it. (...)

My name is Hector Vizcaino. I am in George Washington HS that is the best school in the world. (...)"

On the other hand, some other US school profiles provided a vivid description not only of the school itself, but also of the students' schoolday, including a lot of details, some of them presented in a straightforward way (e.g., description of Madison), concerning the community the students lived (*Appendix C*; see also Tella 1991, 185—186).

The German newsletter included detailed descriptions of students' school days. These descriptions are an interesting combination of fact and fiction, as they were partly influenced by a novel the students had just studied (*Appendix D*).

Reading descriptions written by non-native speakers of English about German and Japanese schools also gave the Finnish students up-to-date material to practise understanding of international English. In the Japanese e-mail, the number of students in one class (47) naturally aroused the Finnish students' attention (*Appendix E*).

One of the most literary and powerful messages concerning schools arrived from Canada and was delivered to the Finnish participating teachers (*Appendix F*). Schools, of course, play just a minor role in this essay, but it, however, gives a strong picture of how it is integrated into this talented student's daily routine.

7.1.3.2. Teachers

Quite a few school descriptions and many of the student profiles included short references to the qualities of the teachers involved. Most of the quotations are short and refer generally to teacher qualities. It is to be assumed that students knowing their e-mails being read afterwards or even during the lesson do not commit themselves to harsh analyses concerning their own teachers. Yet it is interesting to see what kind of remarks are made. It could also be concluded, albeit cautiously, that if no mentions concern teachers, the relationships between them and students might not be alright. Admittedly, students had more interesting topics to discuss than dealing with their teachers. In the first extract, teachers are depicted in an analytic way, rather than just by using one semantically void adjective (like "nice").

"To: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850)
From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 14:13 Sys 12762 (341)
Subject: Finnish Newsletter (...)

There are about (...) 80 teachers both qualified and unqualified. (...) Every subject has its own teacher. The standard of the teachers is quite good but there are some who are terribly poor at teaching. And a couple of teachers think that their subject is the only one and give so much homework that we get stress and nightmares. Luckily we have some great teachers with a sense of humor and some who really understand the pupils. (...)"

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Mon 14-May-90 22:07 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: stories from Brandeis

Hello, my name is Tanesha Wade. I am a senior at Louis D. Brandeis High School. I am going to tell you a little about myself and my school. (...) My school is very fun. Most of the teachers are pretty nice. There are some who can be a real pain."

Not all mentions are that non-committal; Mr Brown, for instance, was colourfully depicted in one student profile:

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)
Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

By the way what are your teachers like? Most of ours are pretty normal, except for George Brown who is like us, down to earth and totally crazy. (...)"

Sometimes a student also deals with the teacher's role more critically. The next girl talks about playing truant—she calls it playing 'hookie'—and how teachers react to it:

"To: TELLA.SEPPÖ (TBX850)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Tue 10-Apr-90 10:47 Sys 12762 (119)

(...) The answer to the 'play-hookie problem' is rather easy to find just if you think a little bit longer than teachers often do. Teachers just look at single times when pupils have been playing hookie and they want to know the reason for it. Maybe they should try to get into the situation of a pupil who most of the time plays hookie. I don't understand why teachers don't tell high school students who often play hookie that there's no meaning in going to school in this student's case. Teachers could say to this youngster that he will never get into a university with his low marks and instead he should get an occupation directly. (...)

I know that it's hard sometimes to be a teacher and I have full understanding that teachers can't always be 100 per cent fair. One other typical thing in school is that teachers learn very soon the manners of their pupils. (...)"

Teachers are also, more or less playfully, accused of school routines:

"#10 10-DEC-1989 15:17:11.61

NEWMAIL

From: IN%"USERNBSP@SFU.BITNET" "Trevor Owen"

To: TELLA@cc.Helsinki.FI

Subj: RE: Greetings (...)

it really makes me resent school having to get up for it and everything the way teachers expect us to get up every day and go through a monotonous routine making our lives an eternal visit to our grandmothers house just to trudge along pretending to be happy with our cheery little faces to spew out all the information we have eaten the night before with disgust (...)
maxeen paabo 12c october 27 1989"

The German newsletter included the most extensive treatment of teachers and their role in classrooms:

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015
 To: School C
 Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

THE GREATEST PEST ON EARTH:

TEACHERS

=====

There are 3 types of teachers at our school :

Type 1:

The teacher, who has an easy going way of teaching and addressing pupils.

But there isn't any friendship between teachers and pupils.

Type 2:

The teacher knows how to teach and how to deal with his subject.

There is a kind of friendship between teacher and pupil.

Type 3:

The teacher who is unable to mediate his knowledge. There is a complicated friendship between teacher and pupils.

We have more than 150 teachers in our school, and every student has a different opinion about the subject and the teacher. The marks depend on the sympathy of the teacher.

(Objection: this is not true at all !! U. Jordan, teacher, see text below by same author)

In our school there is a good relationship between teachers and students. Our lessons are based on the participation of the students. We have a lot of discussions in our lessons. The teachers give us a lot of new information and we draw our own conclusion. We are encouraged to become independent. I think the idea is that we can take our lives into our own hands after school without many difficulties. We can see the teachers as humans and not some godlike authorities.

Relation between pupils and teachers

Altogether in our school the relation between teachers and pupils is a good one, but of course that depends on the age of the students. The relation between younger ones and teachers for example is like parents and children: pupils do what teachers want them to. But nevertheless they (the teachers) generally try to teach without compulsion. More complications exist with pupils from class 8 to 10. There teachers are often a little bit strict because of the mostly bad, impudent behaviour of the students. In class 11 to 13 both 'groups' have almost equal rights, which means that students actually join in the conversation.

In (lower ?) classes that is possible too if someone has good suggestions, but normally only members of the (higher ?) agegroups are in-

terested in thinking about how to improve the lessons. Moreover it is tradition that students and teachers in classes 11 to 13 choose if they want to use the informal personal pronoun 'DU' (you) or the formal 'SIE'. Sometimes within age-groups private parties are arranged and naturally teachers are invited too.

Maren Grau 18 (...)"

Mr Leigh, among others, felt inclined to acknowledge the above comments in his own letter:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 0:14 Sys 10001 (5)

Subject: Reply to: Reply to: Response to Seppo's words

Interesting to read the comments that have arisen. You will have seen Ulrich's excellent letter from Hamburg. Reading between the lines I was most interested to hear about conditions in German schools. I am afraid northern Europe has left UK way behind in provision for education.

Best wishes - Tony"

The topic of teachers did not go on, so only separate comments were made with no real discussion; no continuing dialogue was ever built upon previous contributions. Still, it could be concluded that the school descriptions served their original purpose, letting the students know a little bit more about their partner school conditions. Considering the extra contributions—from east and west—it could be said that the overall picture was made relatively multifaceted.

7.1.3.3. City

A logical enlargement after school descriptions was to tell the partner schools students about the home town or city. This theme—well within the guidelines of the national FL curriculum too—was richly discussed in all participating classes. A thematic analysis is built upon the possible discrepancies students locate in their messages, i.e., something extraordinary or typically local not to be found anywhere else. In the same way, their descriptions concerning their home town would probably reveal some of their attitudes towards their living surroundings. Stylistically, the descriptions vary from a business-like presentation to more personalised views upon the physical and mental *milieu* provided by the respective cities.

The exchange of these messages during fieldwork probably had some influence on the students' writings, which could not be evaluated or assessed during fieldwork itself; it could bear fruit only afterwards in students' subsequent compositions. During the fieldwork period, these kinds of descriptions were widely distributed; not every one of them could be analysed in every class before students' own stories were sent. It would not be, however, quite inappropriate to argue that the way foreign students depicted their cities could have had some influence on Finnish students even if they did not have time to let it show in their own immediate responses.

Another and more immediate profit was that when preparing the city descriptions the Finnish students voluntarily made extensive use of the available brochures of their respective cities, published either in English or in Finnish. Naturally, some of their contributions therefore reflect phrases or terms used in these brochures. At the same time they also had to get familiar with certain new terms, specific concepts describing their own surroundings. A positive side-effect is also to be noted; as some English-language brochures easily lent themselves to open criticism concerning misspellings or odd translations of certain terms, this paved the way for teacher-student discussions in class and heightened students' metalinguistic awareness of the structure of English.

In the following examples, some details have been omitted in order not to pin-point the town itself. Teacher A's students wrote the first description of their home town in mid November 1989:

"24.11.89 [to 10001:YS0007] (...)

(...) is situated in southern Finland near (...), and it is quite a big commune; its total area is about 1,000 sq. km and there are 11,000 inhabitants here.

(...) has been a traditional agricultural commune but now most of the population, about 53 % make a living in services.

The chains of ridges called the Bigger (...) and the Smaller (...) are characteristic of the scenery. There are other longitudinal ridges and hills. So there is a good chance to wander in wilderness. You can also row, ski, canoe, bike and hike in (...). There are two garrisons; in (...) and in (...).

The most important cultural event in summer is the Harvest Light Festival in the middle of August. The main church and the smaller village churches attract a lot of tourists. (...)"

Teacher A's second class worked on the following two assignments on Jan. 22nd, 1990 during a double lesson:

"Tell about [your home town] as a holiday resort.
—information, accommodation, transport, places to eat, expenses, etc.
Tell about your holiday (in Finland or abroad)."

The following fieldnote shows the speed and enthusiasm the students showed when preparing the descriptions:

"The students were asked to speak English, and to work either on their own or in pairs. The second topic was meant to be elaborated on their own. Students also used pocket dictionaries and local brochures, which included useful vocabulary, albeit full of misprints. The 23 students present grouped themselves quickly and efficiently. Two dyads (one consisting of boys, the other of girls) collaborated loosely. The girls read their essays to each other, which was a clever thing to do. Latecomers (coming from the dentist's) joined the other groups. The students were advised to plan their work in advance, before starting to write. Practically nobody seemed to take the advice." (A fieldnote in School A on Jan. 22nd, 1990)

Here is one of the students' contributions:

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Fri 26-Jan-90 12:59 Sys 12762)
Subject: [Home town] (...)

CHOOSE [name of the town]

(...) is a good choice because there are so many possibilities here. You can stay overnight in hotels different cottages and in the summer camping places are the most popular, because in (...) these places are looked after very well and that's why they are tidy. There are very many hobbies, for example surfing on the lake, enjoying fresh nature and so on. Of course you meet friendly people and get new friends as well.

If you come to (...), you must see (...)s main church, which is very beautiful and you also must go to the Finnish Gold Line (boat service). There you can see beautiful and wild landscapes.

If you want to have great fun you can go dancing in (...) (outdoor danceplace) on Sunday nights.

YOU WILL CERTAINLY ENJOY THIS TRIP!!!!

H(...) & J(...)"

All in all, half a dozen descriptions were drawn up and sent to Britain. The students dealt with accommodation, transport, places to eat, shopping facilities, health services, and gave general geographical information about their home town. One of the contributions concentrated on a title "A place of wilderness", another on cultural life in this town. Some local news was also transmitted later in the spring:

"To: NYE001 (134:NYE001)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 14:41 Sys 12762 ()
Subject: Hi from (...)

FOUR CRATES OF KOSKENKORVA FOR THIEVES

Four crates of koskenkorva (80 bottles of strong alcohol) and some cigarettes were stolen from restaurant called (...) in (...). The same thieves maybe also broke into the clothing store of (...) and took jeans. If you saw something strange on Friday night, contact (...)s police. (...)"

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Mon 7-May-90 11:15 Sys 12762 ()
Subject: news from (...)

THE TRAFFIC GOT ON WELL BUT THE UNIFORMEDPOLICE HADN'T PEACE AT EASTER TIME

The traffic got on well in (...) at Easter time. There wasn't any bad blocks. And there wasn't happen any bad traffic accidents. But between Thursday and Monday the police had a lot of work with mischiefs, maltreatments and drunks.

Written by K(...) & M(...)"

Teacher B characterises his students' description of their home town as rather literary. Besides, most of its contents (322 words out of 344) have been directly influenced by the travel brochures of the same town (see beginning of next example), only the last sentence (22 words) is a personalised opinion expressed by the students themselves:

"To: YOJ002
From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 8:57 Sys 10001 ()
Subject: 1st letter (...)

OUR HOMETOWN (...)

[Our hometown], the dynamic northern centre of (...) is located in a pine covered area belonging to the (...) ridge. The green and spacious townscape is characterised by modern architecture and large areas of parkland.

[Our hometown] is still a young town, having been granted its town charter in 1960. Its present population is around 39,000. (...)

This town is a hub of industry, both traditional and modern. The woollen industry, which started in the 1890és, is still going joined by the metal, lift and cable industries, and most recently by glasswool industry.

We like to live here, because this is a peaceful and beautiful little town. People are friendly and always ready to help. (...)"

Only one of Teacher C1's students described her home town in a separate composition with the aim of it being sent to Britain. Teacher C1 characterised it as 'rather commercialised', as it leant heavily on the brochures available. Only the last sentence gives the reader a more personal view of the town and highlights the sights the writer regards as important. Again, this is only one paragraph out of six (32 words out of 250).

"To: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 19-Mar-90 18:23 Sys 12762 (5)
Subject: [My home town] (...)

Finally, I would like to mention that especially in the summer [my home town] with its parks, tree-lined avenues and its busy passenger harbour and market place is an attractive place to visit.

R(...), Class 2C"

The Finnish students also received town descriptions from abroad. The Coombe Girls, for instance, wrote about their own town like this:

"From: COOMBE.GIRLS.ISM (YOJ007) Delivered: Wed 7-Mar-90
14:59 GMT Sys 11
To: School B
Subject: Environment Day (...)

VISIT CHEAM!

Cheam is a small town in Surrey, England. It is a suburb with semi-detached houses (this means two houses joined together). These houses are built with bricks and slates. The average number of bedrooms in a house is three or four. There is usually a kitchen, a dining room, a lounge and a bathroom in a normal home.

In a family the average number of children is two to three. There is usually a family pet also. At least one parent in the family works, but now both parents usually work.

In Cheam there are lots of worth-while places to visit. Some of these places are historical. For example there is the Whitehall, the oldest building in Cheam (which is over five hundred years old). There is also Nonsuch Palace which was used by Henry the VIII.

If you need to shop, Cheam is the place to be! There are two shopping centres, one in Cheam Village and the other in North Cheam. The shops in North Cheam include: Woolworths, Circle K, Sainsbury's and the Wimpy.

If you fancy a swim you can always pop down to Cheam Baths. There is also a library where you can sit quietly and read. In Cheam there are two parks which are joined into one, Nonsuch Park and Cheam Park.

There is a childrens playground,a sports field,tennis courts, putting and a bowling green and gardens full of flowers!
 A couple of months ago Cheam hit the headlines with a robbery at the Midland Bank in Cheam Village ,one million pounds was stolen from a Securicor van delivering to the bank.
 And if you're a church going person there's the three local churches in the area,Cheam Church,Baptist Church and St.Dunstan's Church.
 So now you can see why everyone in Cheam has a smile on their face!
 (...)"

This description gives a lot of information on the main sights, but it also includes aspects highly appreciated in the British Isles, i.e., human interest (robbery, for instance) and pets (in connection with the average number of children). From Finnish students' viewpoint, the description probably includes too many proper names, though teachers usually can recognise and explain most of them. Naturally, the Finnish students could seize the opportunity and ask for explanations regarding names or places they are unfamiliar with.

In addition to the school descriptions above, some other foreign participants sent descriptions of their own towns or cities. Some Madison students, for instance, described their home town like this:

"#1 15-MAY-1990 07:47:21.82 NEWMAIL
 From: IN%"SCHWAEGERLÉvms.macc.wisc.edu" "MICHAEL
 SCHWAEGERL"
 To: TELLAEcc.Helsinki.FI (and Teachers A, B, C1, and C2)
 Subj: Letters from Wisconsin (...)

Hello. My name is Josh Goldfoot, and I go to James Madison Memorial High School in Madison, Wisconsin. Madison is a largely unimportant town, surrounded by great numbers of boring farms and lots of cows. Memorial High is named for a former president of the United States, James Madison, who was largely an unimportant and boring man. (...)

The city of Madison is basically a university town. There are two major colleges here, the University of Wisconsin (a state-run school) and Edgewood College (a private school).

Madison is also the capital of the state of Wisconsin. Many people who live here are employed by the government or in related areas. There is little industry, so most people work in service related jobs like medicine and law.

Madison is centered on an isthmus between two lakes, which provides a nice place for boating and swimming. Madison also has lots of parks which can be really fun. We really like Madison, because it is not too big and has a nice variety of people and things to do.

We're glad we had this chance to meet, too! If you are interested in learning more about the United States, please write back. Bye!

Megan Piper, Jenny Brightbill, and Laura Young. (...)

Some of the most literary ones (about Toronto) came from Canada to be distributed to the Finnish participating teachers and their classes. These compositions, some of which were at once poems, highly outdo the level a Finnish student of English as his first foreign language can attain at senior secondary school level. *Appendix G*, however, as an example of the quality of these contributions, exemplifies the new kind of teaching and learning material that complements students' textbooks.

The German Newsletter also dealt with Hamburg. Two of the contributions included in the newsletter lean more or less on geographical and historical data, the third is a vivid personal view on what had just happened in Hamburg. Although this newsletter came from a country in which English is not spoken as a first language, some of the matters discussed in students' contributions have at least an indirect bearing on the themes discussed widely in Finland during the fieldwork period, i.e. Hanseatic League. Of course, the mention of Mathias Rust interested Finnish participants; he did take off from Helsinki to his notorious flight to the heart of Moscow. Furthermore, these descriptions were written by German students of a same age as most of the Finnish participants (*Appendix H*).

7.1.4. Finland

As the social network of participants included eight other countries in addition to Finland, I assumed a lot would be written about these countries. In the final analysis, this was not to be the case. Finland, for instance, was dealt with in few letters only. Teacher A's students sent some basic facts at the beginning of the fieldwork period:

"24.11.89 [to 10001:YSO007] (...)

Finland lies between Sweden and the Soviet Union. The area of Finland is about 338,000 km² and the population is about five million.

Finland's capital is Helsinki, which lies on the south coast. Finland has a lot of lakes (around 60,000).

The people are very calm but conscious of what is happening around them. We enjoy a high standard of living. Our culture is quite new, and Finnish is a very difficult language for a foreigner to learn. At the moment our country is one of the most expensive countries in Europe.

We have a capitalistic system in our country, and some people think the Finland is the most americanized country in Europe."

Even if most of the composition includes objective facts, the last sentence is an argument, which could have been discussed in more detail. None of the British students, however, argued against this statement.—One of Teacher C1's boys also depicted Finland:

"From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Thu 29-Mar-90 9:04 Sys 12762 (75)
Subject: Regards from Finland to Mr Brown (...)

Finland lies between Sweden and the Soviet Union. Its capital is Helsinki and its population about 4.8 million.

Finland became an independent republic in 1917. The President of Finland is Mr Mauno Koivisto. The president is elected every six years. This is Mr Koivisto's second term. He was elected after Mr Urho Kekkonen, the Finnish leader between 1956—81. Our unicameral Parliament with 200 members is elected every four years.

Finland is often called 'the Land of A Thousand Lakes'. In fact, we have about 100,000 lakes, both big and small. We have great forests, and in northern Finland, Lapland, beautiful fells, too.

Finland is famous for its sportsmen (even today, we hope) like the ski-jumper Matti Nykanen and the rally-drivers Juha Kankkunen and Timo Salonen, but we've got many internationally well-known artists and architects, too. I could mention Esa-Pekka Salonen, the conductor, and singers like Matti Salonen, Martti Talvela (who died last summer), or Miss Karita Mattila. Finnish architecture is maybe not so famous today, as it was at Eero Saarinen's or Alvar Aalto's time, but there are still some distinguished architects and some interesting younger ones.

If you want to know more, you can always ask me and my classmates.
J(...) (...) "

Besides the above facts, also national news was transmitted to participating schools. It would be interesting to conclude what sort of a general concept of Finland this news gave to the foreigners!

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Mon 7-May-90 11:19 Sys 12762 ()
Subject: News (...)

A SWAN MADE THE WHOLE VILLAGE SUFFER ABOUT DARKNESS

A swan which was in a hurry to reach the North scratched an electrical wire on Thursday. The whole village in (...) and a part of (...) were without electricity.

A cottager heard a loud bang and called the police. The policeman noticed that the bird was dead. The swan was sent to the zoological museum to be examined. The blackout was not very long.

[A local newspaper]/T(...) from 1b"

"To: YMB080 (10001:YMB080)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 12:19 Sys 12762 0
Subject: Local [and National] News (...)

A Man Was Stabbed In (...)

A 42-year-old man from (...) was found killed on Friday from his apartment. The Police thinks, that the stabbing had been happened one day before finding him. A 44-year-old man from (...) has been arrested during the investigations. The suspect has stayed at the victim's place for few months. The investigations of this crime are still unfinished. The autopsy will be done at the beginning of next week. The police knows nothing about the motive but thinks that alcohol must have had something to do with this case.

A Loaded Recoilles Rifle Was Stolen From (...)

A loaded recoilles rifle was stolen between Friday and Saturday from the store of arms. The missing recoilles rifle is model 66 KES 75. It is 80 cms(31,5 inches) and loaded with a cavity-shell. The police say that the stolen weapon is loaded and ready to be shot with. The shell can even go through wall, which is made of cement. If it is triggered indoors, the pressure will kill the people inside.

A Fastfoodkiosk Robbery In (...)

A fastfoodkiosk robbery happened near the centre of (...). A man, who was masked with a skiing cap and scarf, robbed the kiosk by threatning the assistant with a handweapon, which resembled a pistol. The robber is still free. He escaped by car, which was an old, mustard yellow Toyota Corolla.

These items of news appeared in the local papers around the first of May. (...)"

Some foreign students did ask a few questions about Finland, perhaps partly out of politeness but certainly also out of curiosity, e.g.,

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 20:45 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: stories from Brandeis (...)

I am really looking forward to hereing from you. I want you to tell me everything you know about your country and how you spend a typical day in your school. I also want to know some of the school functions that the students run in your school.

Yours truly,
Jeannette Prado (...)

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)
Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

HI,A(...) and L(...) (...)

What sort of a country is Finland? I do European Studies,so I know a little about Finland but not that much. If there is anything you want to know about Britain,I will do my best to help you. (...)

MANEVR (...)"

Unfortunately, A(...) and L(...) did not have time to elaborate on this question of Manevr.

A couple of misunderstandings arose. Some students of Mr Mundt mixed Finland and Norway, which was quickly corrected by their teacher:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: YSO007 Delivered: Tue 21-Nov-89 20:01 Sys 10001 (130)

Subject: our first letter (...)

We are Darren and Matthew. (...) We are doing an Environment project, and we want you to send some information on what are the main environment issues are in Norway. (...)

WE ARE WRITING FROM TANBRIDGE HOUSE SCHOOL IN ENGLAND TO YOU TO COMPARE DIFFERENT RECIPES FROM ENGLAND TO YOURS IN NORWAY. WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT SORT OF FOODS THE TEENAGERS OF NORWAY EAT. (...)"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: YSO007 Delivered: Tue 21-Nov-89 20:03 Sys 10001 (10)

Subject: Teacher A (...)

Have just checked the last message and have realised that my students thought Helsinki was in Norway!!!!

Do send my apologies to your class. I will tell my class to get out their maps.

best wishes

Paul"

An American girl obviously located Finland somewhere behind the former German Democratic Republic, as she was worried about whether Finns can meet relatives beyond the Berlin wall:

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 20:45 Sys 134

To: Teacher A

Subject: stories from Brandeis (...)

Hello my name is Jeannette Prado. I've been living in the US all my life. (...)

P.S.—Do you have any relatives in the other side of the Berlin wall? And if you do, are you going to see them soon? Since they are going to tear down the wall?"

Some typical Finnish institutions, sauna first of all, were mentioned in a few letters, but only briefly, in connection with Christmas, for instance. One student from School A told about swimming in a frozen lake in the wintertime. Some Form 1 students of Teacher C1 wrote about alcohol misuse:

"To: TELLA.SEPPÖ (TBX850)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Wed 21-Mar-90 11:50 Sys 12762 (32)

Subject: Newsletter2 (...)

Finns and alcoholism

Why do people in Finland drink so much? Why are there always drunk Finns on the beaches of Spain? From where did they get money for a bottle of spirits even though it cost a fortune?

These are questions that are uppermost in foreigners' mind. They don't get any straight answers. It's true that those observations give them that kind of picture.

The real situation is that when Finns go abroad they notice how cheap alcohol really is. After that he or she can't control himself or herself at all. The other reason is the mentality. They don't have 'lower gear', when they drink they have no end—they drink until they pass out.

We have some addicts to alcohol in Finland although our spirits cost a lot. You always wonder how those alcoholics can afford to drink so much in Finland. Maybe we have so considerable unemployment benefits that they can buy it.

T(...) N(...) & M(...) J(...) 1a, [School C], Finland"

Otherwise Finnish characteristics did not arouse much discussion. It could be concluded that these features might not be as topical in young people's minds as they are in adults' mental images about this country.

7.1.5. National Days and Holidays

Quite a few letters were sent and received concerning the names of national days and holidays. Students also wrote about some special flag-raising days. This topic broadened the teachers' and their students' knowledge about the theme itself and also about English-language terminology. The beginning of discussion is reported in Tella (1991, 170—171). Here are some of the answers received and other letters concerning this topic.

To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
 From: YSO007 Delivered: Tue 5-Dec-89 19:13 Sys 10001 (15)
 Subject: Itsenaisy ys paiva¹

Dear Seppo and [Teacher A] and all our friends at [School C]
 We have just discovered it is your independence day.

So HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!!!!

Why not send us some more information.

We have Guy Fawkes Day on November 5th but its not the same.
 best wishes from Tanbridge"

Mr Leigh was the first to list the British feast days:

To: Teacher A [and TELLA.SEPPÖ]
 From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Sun 11-Feb-90 17:15 Sys 10001 (42)
 Subject: Response to Seppo's words (...)

UK Feast Days 1990 when businesses are closed.

Jan 1	New Years Day
Mar 17	St Patrick's Day (Northern Ireland only)
Apr 13	Good Friday
Apr 16	Easter Monday (not Scotland)
May 7	Bank Holiday (to call it Labour Day or celebrate on May 1 with present government is inviting deportation to South Georgia or at best a sentence trying to scrub the glow off the rocks in the Irish Sea).
May 29	Spring Bank Holiday
Jun 3	Whitsun
27 Aug	Bank Holiday (not Scotland)
25 Dec	Christmas Day
26 Dec	Boxing Day

Bank Holidays were originally so called because the banks had to give their employees these days off. They have now caught the habit and seem to be closed more often than open. Like Sundays, Bank Holidays are celebrated by most people (except school teachers!).
 (...) Best wishes - Tony"

Ms Rosengart provided the students with US national days:

To: Teacher A
 From: PS26 (NYE013) Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 15:38 Sys 134 (44)
 Subject: Seppo's words from the U.S.

¹ The subject was written in Finnish: *Itsenäisyyspäivä* = Independence Day.

(...) United States National Holidays for 1990

Jan. 1—New Year's Day is always on the first day of January. It is to celebrate a new year. At 12:00pm on Dec. 31 people blow horns and throw confetti.

Jan. 15—Martin Luther King's Birthday—He helped to get equality for black people

Feb. 19—President's Day is when we honor President Lincoln and President Washington. They were our most honorable and most important presidents

April 13—Good Friday—The Friday before Easter

April 15—Easter

May 28—Memorial Day is a day when the people who died while serving in the armed forces are honored.

July 4—Independence Day—We celebrate getting our freedom from England's rule.

Sept. 3—Labor Day—A day to celebrate the workers who work every day. They get this day off!

October 8—Columbus Day—We celebrate Christopher Columbus' voyage to the new world, and the discovery of America

Nov. 11—Veteren's Day is when we honor ALL of the soldiers who fought for us

Nov. 22—Thanksgiving is when the Pilgrims gave thanks to God and the Indians after the first harvest in a new land.

Election day is a National Holiday when we are voting for president (every 4 years)

Dec. 25 Christmas Day

Please send us a short description of what your national holidays are.
Terry Rosengart, and the children of P.S. 26 Bronx, NY, USA"

The discussion was continued by Mr Jonsson, who described vividly some Icelandic feast days (*Appendix D*). His contribution was also forwarded to the teachers of Swedish in School C. It aroused a lot of interest and one of the teachers soon decided their language department should also get a password on one of the e-mail systems. As Icelandic represents an old Scandinavian and Germanic language, the etymologies also helped students of English to understand what the days of the week really mean. The old name of Saturday (*Laugardagur*) also evokes the corresponding Finnish term (*lauantai*). The Japanese feast days were also circulated through the Global Village (*Appendix J*).

The importance of all these lists was obvious: the students could become acquainted with some features of foreign cultures. A comparison of, say, Japanese and Icelandic feast days leads to a lot of inductions from the cultural background of these two countries. Then it is also easier to see our own feast days in a different light.

Finnish students also wrote about some of the official or flag-raising feast days in Finland. This proved a good way of introducing some elements of Finnish culture into FL teaching.

"To: TELLASEPPO (TBX850)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 14:13 Sys 12762 (341)

Subject: Finnish Newsletter

About some national holidays

We are going to tell you about some national holidays. We will tell you how Finnish people spend these three days (New Years evening, Easter, Christmas).

New Year's evening 31.12.

We youth have great parties. We celebrate the change of year in Senaatintori, which is a very big place in the middle of the town. at 23.45 the mayor of Helsinki speaks. At the end everybody sings together Finland's national song. At 00.00 a great fireworks starts.

Christmas evening 24.12.

In the morning father and children go and buy a very beautiful christmas tree. When they come home with the tree mother has made all the foods: rosolli which is made from carrots, onions, beetroots, pickles etc. Ham is the main food of the Christmas. Potato-, carrot-, swede casseroles are mother's proof of skill. In the evening all the family assemble to celebrate Christmas eve. If the family have got little children the Santa Claus usually comes. Then all the fun begins.

Easter 13.4.—16.4.

Easter has lost almost all religious significance, it has become children's entertainment. They eat chocolate eggs and they dress like the witches and they go to people's home and say some magic words. Adults who are in high spirits give them some candies and money. At Easter we usually eat dish made (which is mixed with water to a thick consistency, then malted by heating it over a slow fire, baked in birch-bark baskets and served with cream.) Lam and pasha are Easter foods too.

made by M(...), P(...) and J(...) (...)"

"To: TELLASEPPO (TBX850)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 14:13 Sys 12762 (341)

Subject: Finnish Newsletter (...)

FINNLAND'S NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Kalevala's day 28.2.

Our national epic appeared in 1835. It was collected by Elias Lonnrot. We play the kantele which is a Finnish musical instrument, originally with five strings over a horizontal sounding board and plucked by hand.

Vappu 1.5 (The First of May)

The First of May is the day of Finnish work. Students put their white caps on their heads. People drink champagne and some of them get drunk. People are dressed in funny, colourful clothes. Politicians make speeches and everybody has fun.

Midsummer 22.6.

Many of us make big campfires which are called kokkos in Finnish. We eat sausages and strawberries and children dance folkdances. Finnish people celebrate this party often in their summer cottages or in the archipelago.

by I(...), K(...) and N(...) (...)"

"To: YDO076 (10001:YDO076)

From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Wed 9-May-90 10:37 Sys 12762 (68)

The first of May

A couple of weeks ago Finland was like Rio de Janeiro during its samba-carnevals. The streets of the city were full of people, the cars were prohibited. Everybody was having some kind of joking gear and wearing crazy costumes; batman-masks, colourful whisks and wigs for example. At 6 p.m. was time for the tradition of Havis Amanda. Every year this prudent female statue gets washed and embraced by university students. The rest of the evening she gets the honor of wearing a white cap.

Traditional 'vappu' foods are 'sima' or mead and 'tippaleipä' or fritties. And of course, champagne and sparkling wines belong to this celebration.

And the park of Esplanad stays full of partying people until the sun comes up...

The first of May is for all kinds of political party meetings. It's the fact that the first of May is the laborers' festival. Also there is a concert in Finlandia House, which is very amusing. The party is beginning to be finally over, and life gets slowly back to its old shape...

How about you? Do you celebrate the first of May at all? (...)

L(...) and M(...) (...)"

As two big feast days (Christmas and Easter) occurred at a time when some of the participating classes had a zero period, these festivities were dealt with in only a few contributions. Students from School A wrote about Christmas (the original e-mails were sent to Britain before Christmas but again on Jan. 3rd, 1990, as Teacher A had had some technical problems.

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Wed 3-Jan-90 14:56 Sys 12762 ()

Subject: jUST TO EE

(...) Christmas by Finnish Way (...)

Christmas presents

Everybody gives quite a lot of presents to their families at Christmas here in Finland. Father Christmas visits people's homes on christmas eve and gives the presents. What kind of presents do you have? And how much presents do you get?

M(...), P(...), I(...)

At christmas finnish people give their relatives and acquaintances flowers like hyacinths and tulips. Flowers Warm up the friends' hearts and we get a good mind. We send a lot of christmas cards too. Cards are very beautiful, because they have nice winter landscapes and very often Santa Claus and brownies. In this Way it is good to remember friends and relatives.

H(...), M(...)

Most people go to church on christmas day early morning. Before families used to have horses but nowadays they drive a car to church. In church is Christmas tree and many candles so there is solemn atmosphere. Also There sings Christmas hymn.

T(...), A(...)

We tell you something about original finnish Santa Claus. Santa has a long, white beard and white curly hair which can be seen hanging under His Red Hood. Believe or not that he has lived in Korvatunturi, LAPPLAND for hundreds of years. Everybody can hear jingle bells when he comes with reindeer on Christmas Eve to give presents. Because Santa is so old, he has tiny helpers called brownies.

Christmas tree

Can you believe that finns bring a Fir inside on X-mas eve morning. Then kids trim it with coloured balls, candles, jingle bells, glisten ribbons and last father puts the star on the top. In the evening everybody danced around the tree.

Looking toward to hearing about your Christmas traditions.

Yours, S(...), J(...), H(...), M(...)

On Christmas Eve

Finnish Christmas Eve begins so that before noon on Christmas Eve everybody eats rice porridge. After that father brings the Christmas tree in and children trim it. When the tree is trimmed the whole family goes to the cemetery and light candles on relatives graves. The way back home is peaceful. At home father heats the sauna and the rest of the family make christmas food. When the sauna is warm we go in there and after the sauna and Christmas dinner we go to the living-room to waiting for Father Christmas. He brings a lot of presents for everybody. Then Father Christmas goes to the next home. We open the presents and we spend a peaceful Christmas evening.

M(...), A(...), T(...), N(...), I(...)"

St. Valentine's Day on February 14th, 1990, was a proper test for quick exchanges of e-mails. Wishes were sent by both teachers and students. At the same time, some other information was exchanged.

"To: YOJ002 (10001:YOJ002)
From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 14-Feb-90 11:43 Sys 1276
Subject: St Valentine's Day

Dear Lawrence,
On behalf of my class I would like to wish you and your students a very Happy Valentine's Day.
I say on behalf my students because at this time of year the students in their final year at school are about to leave, and the pupils in their second year are busy preparing all kinds of surprises and also a party for them.
I think I am right in saying that Valnetine's Day is in most Finns' mind something connected with the Anglo-Saxon world, and perhaps even with the US in the first place. The habit of celebrating this day is, however, not entirely unknown here, either, and is in fact becoming more popular all the time. I am sending you this just in case the pupils' contributions are delayed for the above mentioned reasons.
With best wishes, [Teacher B]"

A group of students produced the following letter sent at the end of the lesson:

"To: YOJ002 (10001:YOJ002)
From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 14-Feb-90 11:46 Sys 1276
Subject: Messages from my students on Feb. 14th, 1990

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY!!!!

We are A(...), Robyn, N(...) and A(...) and we want to wish you a happy Valentines Day. Here in Finland we only send cards to our friends and we give little gifts. In Australia we send all kinds of gifts like flowers or soft toys and it is usually only to our special Valentine. (Robyn is from Australia). Keep Smiling and have a good day! Ciao!

Robyn, an Australian girl, was in class for this single time but fruitfully co-operated with the Finnish students.

On February 14th, 1990, I also sent a short St. Valentine's message to some 50 e-mail accounts around the world:

"To: [all participating schools, teachers, and friends overseas]
From: TELLA.SEPP0 (TBX850) Delivered: Wed 14-Feb-90 8:33 Sys 12762 (5)
Subject: Culture-on St. Valentine's (...)

Dear E-Mail Friend,
 E-mail friend? E-friend? E?
 Electronic? Elegant? Enthusiastic? Elusive (sometimes)?
 Efficient? (sure!) Earnest? Earthly? (no!!) Ebullient? (Hm)
 Eccentric? (up to U to decide) Effusive? (no!) Eloquent?
 Enchanting? Encouraging? Epicurean? (??) Extrovert?

Thanks for being all that—and maybe more, in the positive sense of the word.

On St. Valentine's Day (celebrated in Finland since 1987)

Seppo (...)"

Teacher C1 also utilised the day in order to send a message to Mr Brown, who replied the next day with some hilarious incident that had happened on St. Valentine's Day.

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Wed 14-Feb-90 12:08 Sys 12762 (9)

Subject: A student letter to Mr Brown

Dear George

Happy Valentine to you and your students from all of us here in (...).

(...) Teacher C1(...)"

"To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059 Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 18:17 Sys 10001 (52)

Subject: fao Teacher C1—belated Valentine's wishes

Dear [Teacher C1] (...)

Thankyou for your letter and of, course, your St.Valentine wishes. I see from one of Seppo's letters that St.Valentine's Day has been celebrated in Finland since 1987—so it is quite new. Do you send anonymous romantic messages to loved ones? Three students in our school decided to run a little business this year transporting messages around the school on the day. A message cost 20p, and a red carnation flower (for love) or a white one (for friendship) cost 80 pence.

One male member of staff sent a red carnation to the attractive lady who is Head of Humanities. It was presented in the middle of a lesson, in front of a class, by a girl student who had been sworn to secrecy. Much embarrassment and intrigue followed! (And they think I'm crazy!) (...) George. (...)"

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Fri 16-Feb-90 11:06 Sys 12762 (1)

Subject: Reply to: fao Teacher C1—belated Valentine's wishes

Hi George

Thanks for your greetings.

Yes, especially young people follow the fashion of sending secret love letters to each other. I think it's true to say that especially the younger generation follows many customs and traditions from the Anglo-Saxon world—and that's understandable because of the influence of TV, films and other mass media. St Valentine's is one of the best things we have got from the Anglo-American culture. (...)

Best wishes"

Excluding the above messages, St. Valentine's fell through, e-mail-wise. Only about ten messages were sent or received that day or the following day. Either people had not yet started celebrating St. Valentine's or they could not combine e-mailing with it.

On the whole, the theme of feast days proved fruitful in many ways; it brought in new vocabulary and it provided with crosscultural explanations, among other things. The e-mail network served in this case as an electronic database, through which a certain topic was discussed in order to allow the students' original knowledge to get enriched.

7.1.6. Hobbies, Sports, and Free Time

Ways of spending one's free time or leisure time in general are incorporated into the first two courses of the nationwide FL curriculum (Anon. 1985). The students described their hobbies, favourite sports or different ways of spending their free time either in their profiles or more collectively in connection with young people. Again, I am of the opinion that the mention of certain hobbies counts less if there is no continuation or if the writer does not motivate or explain his hobby in more specific terms. Naturally, many of the hobbies are self-evident, e.g., if one is interested in basketball, the name is enough to give a clue. But it would be interesting to know something more precise of this hobby, such as how often the writer plays it or whether he appreciates it only as a spectator sport, etc. In this sense, the following view by Emma is a personal one. It expresses her worry about her favourite ice rink being closed down.

"From: COOMBE.GIRLS.ISM (YOJ007) Delivered: Wed 7-Mar-90
14:59 GMT Sys 11
To: Teacher B
Subject: Environment Day (...)

ICE SKATING.

My hobby is Ice Skating. I go every Saturday at 9 o'clock. I myself was very upset when I found out that Richmond Ice Rink was closing down. Lots of people enjoy going to Richmond Ice Rink because it is different than going to cinemas because it is active. At Richmond they have taught Prince Charles, Princess Alexandra, and Princess Anne to skate. So it will be a shame when it will have to be closed down. I've been told that a new Ice rink is being built. I really like the lessons that they hold on every week day. They hold tests to do different steps. I've done my grade one to three. I really hope that Richmond Ice rink will not close down. Everyone who enjoys Ice Skating will have to find some where else to skate or wait till the new Ice rink would be opened.

By Emma Turner. (...)"

The first of the next four writers does not motivate his favourite sport at all. The other three do it from various angles, either as a spectator sport or through their own proficiency:

"From: S.GERSH (NYE001) Delivered: Fri 27-Apr-90 18:57 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: LETTERS FROM NY STUDENTS (...)"

My name is Ronnie Collado and I am 118. (...) My favorite sport is soccer and baseball. Sorry, I can not write no more so Bye for now. please write soon. (...)

My name is Chris Triantos and I am 15 years old. (...) My favorite sport is basketball. My favorite team in the NBA is the NY Knick but they are going to get swept in the first round against the Boston Celtics. (...) Please write back soon. (...)

My name is Manny Peralta. I am 16 years old (BOY). (...) My favorite sport is basketball. As a matter of fact basketball is the game I play best. (...) please write back soon. (...)"

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)
Subject: First communications to Teacher C1(...)"

My name is Nigel Bambrough. (...) Out of school I have several hobbies my main one being Athletics, which I spend most of my spare time doing. I train with the Chesham Harriers and the Wycombe Phoenix, my favourite event being the 100 metres and triple jump. I also go snorkeling every Saturday with a club and at Chesham Leisure Centre swimming pool on Thursdays, I take my Bronze Medallion, a life saving award. (...)"

Different kinds of sports—aerobics, badminton, baseball, basketball, canoeing, cycling, darts, golf, icehockey, orienteering, running or jogging, sailing, scuba-diving, skating, (cross-country or downhill) skiing, slalom, snooker or pool, soccer, softball, squash, tennis, volleyball, weight-training, etc.—were among the most popular hobbies. A number of boys were interested in powerboats and cars, which also interested some girls in Mr Brown's class in particular. Throwing parties or going to discos was a way of spending one's free time many Finnish and foreign students had in common.

"#1 15-MAY-1990 07:47:21.82 NEWMAIL
From: IN%"SCHWAEGERLÉvms.macc.wisc.edu" "MICHAEL
SCHWAEGERL"
To: TELLAEcc.Helsinki.FI (and Teachers A, B, C1, and C2)
Subj: Letters from Wisconsin (...)

Dear Friends in Finland,

We are writing to you on behalf of our tenth-grade English class. We would like to let you know what kids in the United States do for fun. If you have a car, it greatly expands your freedom. You can go anywhere within reason, without having any problems. The most common weekend activity is parties. People have them all the time. Kids from all around come to eat, dance, listen to music, and just have a good time. It is a great way to relax after a long week. (...) Although everyone's tastes are different, most kids find these activities enjoyable. Joel Walker, John Roberts and Andy Olson. (...)"

In the following e-mails, there are also comments on the writers' hobbies:

"To: YOJ002
From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 8:57 Sys 10001)
Subject: 1st letter (...)

I'm a 17-year-old girl and my name is P(...) T(...). (...) In my freetime I read, watch TV or something else less useful. I like dancing and once a week I go to a dance school. It's a modern dance school. In winter I go downhill skiing. I'm interested in history. (...)"

"To: YDO076 (10001:YDO076)
From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:25 Sys 12762 (8)
Subject: answers to Simon and Phil (...)

We two are 17-year old Finnish girls. (...) We are very much interested in languages and different cultures. We speak Finnish, Swedish, English, French, German and Russian. Our hobbies are both downhill and crosscountry skiing, playing tennis, dancing (even LAMBADA

!!!), riding, jogging, aerobics, reading. We both read a lot of historical books; our favourite writer is Jane Austen, though also Science Fiction books are interesting. (...)

Anyway we try to get time to go out. Every week we go 3 or 4 times to movies and we will not miss any hockey game of our favourite team. We spend a lot of our free time also in museums and art exhibitions. After them we go to a nice little cafe where we discuss about what did we see. During the weekends we visit discos and restaurants. We have founded a club called 'Bailaveikkojen hippayhdistys' and that means about a club for party animals. (...)

Lots of love, H(...) & T(...)"

The following e-mail also characterises a typical American student in that he is active in several sports.

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Wed 9-May-90 16:41 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: stories from Brandeis

(...) I usually go to parties with friends whenever I can. You can find a party around my neighborhood every weekend. It is really fun around here when you know how to live around here. When I got here I had to get used to living in this country. I am a senior at Brandeis High School and I am involved in a lot of activities here at Brandeis. I am the vice-president of the senior class, member of the honor society, member of BASA (Brandeis Association of Students Activities), member of the soccer team (football), and member of the Volleyball team. I hope I did not get you bored with all the stuff I wrote you because I did get bored.

Renaldy Valverde."

Photography, drawing, reading, riding, visiting art exhibitions, chatting on the phone, going to the cinema or renting movies to watch together on the videocassette recorder, going shopping, and playing some musical instrument (piano, guitar, electric organ) or listening to various sorts of music were also mentioned a number of times. Computers too were cited occasionally. One of the rarest hobbies was collecting sneakers:

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Thu 10-May-90 17:56 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: stories from Brandeis

Hi, my name is David Lu and I am a senior at Louis D. Brandeis High School. I am 19 years old and I live in New York City. (...)

I have many hobbies and interest that I like to do. My favorite hobby and interest is playing basketball. I play at least four days a week or more. I'll play on rainy, snowy, cold, or hot weather. I also like to

go swimming in the summer time. If I could, I would swim in the winter time(indoors). Another hobby of mind is collecting sneakers. I love to wear a new pair of sneakers every other week. I do so in the summer time because the weather is good. Since I gave you a little description of myself and some of my interests, I would like to know a little about you and your interests.

Fondly,
David Lu"

Language studies were exceptional. They were mainly talked about by Finnish students:

"To: YOJ002
From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 8:57 Sys 10001)
Subject: 1st letter (...)

My name is J(...) M(...). I am a 17 year old girl. (...) My hobbies are painting, dancing and I study Russian in my spare time. (...)

Hi there! My name is O(...) R(...) and I'm a 17-year old girl. (...) In my spare time I do aerobick sometime and I'm learning signlanguage with hands too. I also belong to the school's drawing club. (...)

Some letters contained a collective story of a hobby, such as scouting, or they concentrated on young people's free time from a more general viewpoint:

"To: Teacher B
From: SCHOOLS.IT.UNIT (YOJ002) Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 14:57
Sys 10001) (...)

We belong to the Tiffin School Scout Group, it has about 50 members. We are part of the south west of London network of Scout Groups. We are able to play Table-Tennis at break or lunch if we want to. There are a wide range of activities that we do at scouts, such as:-Rifle shooting, swimming, cooking, archery, cycling and badgework. We have badges for being good at certain activities, and completing various tests. I have got 1 badge and Andrew has got 10 badges, but he has been in another scout troop.

JAN HYDZIK & ANDREW NUTT."

"To: YOJ002
From: Teacher B Delivered: Mon 12-Mar-90 16:26 Sys 10001)
Subject: Contributions (...)

COMPARATIVE STUDIES

1. SPARE TIME ACTIVITIES

In [our home town] the young spend their spare time in many ways. We have good possibilities for extracurricular activities and other ac-

tivities like sports clubs etc. provided the council. There are also places where the young can gather and do all kinds of things together. It's nice to spend a Friday or Saturday evening with your friends in one of the restaurants which are allowed for people over 18. If we sometimes haven't got anything special to do, we just hang around with our friends and have a good time. (...)"

"To: TELLA.SEPPÖ (TBX850)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 14:13 Sys 12762 (341)

Subject: Finnish Newsletter (...)

YOUTH'S FREETIME

There is quite a lot of freetime in the Finnish schoolyear. Schooldays usually take from 8 to 15 in five days a week. There are also a lot of vacations for example: summer holiday, winter holiday, Easter holiday, Christmas holiday and so on. There are 190 schooldays in a year. So there is a lot of time to have hobbies and fun.

Young people meet each other usually in parties which always take place on Friday or Saturday. Young people have fun and they can hear what is on the air. Young people have also a lot of hobbies in Finland. The most popular are sports events like football, ice-hockey and so on.

Finnish youth always want to have fun in their holidays but during the summer holiday they work because they need money. Slalom skiing is also popular in winter and many young people go always skiing in winter. The best place to ski is Lapland but there are also quite good places in southern Finland.

O(...) AND R(...) (...)"

"To: YDO076 (10001:YDO076)

From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Wed 14-Feb-90 12:01 Sys 12762 (2)

Subject: another letter to Peter's students (...)

Hey. We are two muscular adonis, K(...) and T(...), from (...). Our task was to tell you something about our own hobbies, and Finns generally go in for.

In spring we play football, baseball and ultimate (that is a frisby game). Sometimes we go swimming or bowling. In winter we generally play ice-hockey and basketball, but this winter we haven't been able to play these games, because we have had to practise for schooldances.

Also in sparetime young people are very interested in different sports. The most popular sport events are bodybuilding and self-defence sports especially full-contact karate and judo.

Traditionally Finns have succeeded best in cross-country skiing, rally and ski-jumping (by the way, have you ever heard about Matti Nykänen?). The secret of our success in these sport events are Finland's good location, conditions and Finnish perseverance.

We are looking forward to your letter and we hope that you will tell us something about your hobbies.

BEST WISHES : K(...) & T(...) "

Some typically national sports, like cricket and Finnish baseball, were described in detail:

"From: TIFFIN.BOYS.ISM (YOJ013) Delivered: Fri 12-Jan-90 14:08 GMT Sys 11
To: Teacher B (...)

In the house cricket there are different competitions depending on the ages of the pupils involved, the three age groups are junior, for first years, intermediate for second and third years and finally senior for fourth, fifth and sixth years. In each competition the best two houses are seeded and they don't have to play in the first round. The competition finishes with the final.

The rugby and football use the same system with all the houses playing each other once. Winners of each match get two points, for draws both teams receive one point, the team with the most points after all the matches is the winner.

Michael Hooke & Anirban Roy"

In School B, the "baseball group" kept on editing and elaborating their text on Finnish baseball. Some concepts, like *vuoropari*, were rather difficult to translate and explain in English.

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: Teacher B Delivered: Tue 24-Apr-90 15:15 Sys 10001 (394)
Subject: Baseball (...)

couional game is called 'pesapallo' (Finnish baseball). It was invented by Lauri Tahko' Pihkala in the early of the 20th century. [Our town] is the most successful baseball town in Finland. It has a team called (...) and their baseball stadium i in middlefield and one in frontfield. Then there are three bases and in every base there's one player. Then there is also homebase and there's a player called pitcher.

When the team is in inning they are trying to get as many runs as they can. nto field and the other players try to get him to second base, then to third base and finally to home base. When the field team manages to make three 'burns' it's time to change places. The team who scores more runs in nine sets wins the whole matchbelong to the Finnish championship league. Every team plays against every other team. The best team of all will have a prize and honour. The winner last season was 'Down Lakeés anchors'.

P.S. Lauri Pihkala was a professor of sports. He created. (...)"

The previous text was a bit muddled, for which Teacher B apologised. It would have been interesting to have some feedback from the foreign students in order to learn whether the above description could be understood by the British students, for instance. On the

other hand, from the Finnish students' point of view, the process itself of trying to explain highly technical concepts and terms in English constituted a major part of the assignment.

The difference between some school activities, extracurricular activities, and one's free time activities is sometimes rather loose, especially in American schools. Charity work, for instance, was mentioned in several letters coming from both Britain and the USA.

"From: COOMBE.GIRLS.ISM (YOJ007) Delivered: Wed 7-Mar-90
14:59 GMT Sys 11
To: Teacher B
Subject: Environment Day (...)

In our school we have different activities like netball, hockey we also have an activity which is called a charity week. It is when a house like Saturn make things for it like cakes, band, ribbons, and raffle and guess the teddy bears name. All this goes to children who suffered a lot because they have disease which makes them look fat but they are just not getting enough protein. (...)"

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)
Subject: First communications to Teacher C1(...)

Hello, my name is Claire Pearce and I am sixteen years old. (...) I enjoy swimming, reading, listening to music (most types), socialising, going to the cinema I also go to my local church and I enjoy watching T.V. I enjoy meeting people and also help out with charities such as the National Children's Home and raising money for projects in poor countries. (...)"

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 20:45 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: stories from Brandeis

Life In New York (...)

High school in the city is very open and friendly. People really get to communicate with each other in Brandeis, and we also like to do a lot of things together. Things like charity meetings, parties, trips, projects, etc. In short we look out for each other, especially when someone is in trouble. (...)"

A short description of sports in Hamburg was written by Bettina, 17, and transmitted to our schools via the Global Village:

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015
To: School C
Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

SPORTS IN HAMBURG

In Hamburg you have the chance to take up many different kinds of sport. My favorite ones are volleyball and badminton. But the most famous sport are football (soccer), tennis and swimming. In Hamburg there are many different official events and meetings. For example: There is the 'Hanse-Marathon' or the 'Derby' or some other exciting events. During 'Sail 1989' many great sailingboats came to Hamburg. In Hamburg there are also tournaments in tennis, volleyball and in other popular sports. Sometimes there are great tennis matches. Steffi Graf and Ivan Lendl won the last tournament. In January and May 1989 there were volleyball tournaments. The best teams of the world were in our city at that time. These teams were from Cuba, Argentina, ZSK Moscow and Japan.

by Bettina Pogarell 17 years (...)"

In short, hobbies and ways of spending one's free time was a very popular theme indeed. It made it possible for the teachers and their students to compare different hobbies and sports but also get familiar with new emphasis on hobbies not that popular in one's own country.

7.1.7. Pets

Talking about one's pets closely belongs to themes associated with family life, everyday activities, and, to some extent, with ways of spending one's free time. From a thematic analysis point of view, once again, more important is how young people motivate the companionship of pets in their lives or what sort of influence pets have on them, rather than simple lists of what animals are kept or regarded as pets in modern society.

A bit surprisingly, not many students mention a pet when they describe themselves or their family. Oddly enough, more Finnish students speak of their pets or *not* having a pet than English or American students, for instance. It may be that some of the foreign students, Mr Brown's class for instance, were more vocationally oriented and liked to concentrate on other topics they found more captivating.

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:13 Sys 12762 (2)
Subject: answers to george (...)

My name is S(...) P(...). (...) I also love animals very much though I do not have a pet of my own. (...)

My name is J(...) P(...) and I live in (...). I am an only child and I don't have any pets. They are a bit difficult to keep in our flat. (...)

In the following, some emphasis will be put on pointing out any special features or peculiarities associated with pets and indicated in students' e-mails. On the whole, pets are usually described in a few words or their names are explained:

"From: YLB053 Posted: Wed 14-Mar-90 17:31 Sys 1 (...)

My name is Jake Johnson. (...) I have a pet Rabbit called Buggy, after Bugs Bunny and Buggy Malone. (...)"

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:13 Sys 12762 (2)
Subject: answers to george (...)

My name is R(...) . I am an 18-year-old girl (...). I also spend a lot of time with my 7-month-old poodle. (...)"

In the following e-mail, the cats' names, two typical and common boys' names in Finland, form a nice albeit perhaps unwanted contrast between pets and human beings. Generally speaking, pets are, most naturally, often associated or contrasted with other members of the family:

"To: YOJ002
From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 8:57 Sys 10001)
Subject: 1st letter (...)

My name is A(...) J(...). I'm a 17 year old Finnish (...) In our one-family house live my mother R(...), my father E(...) and two cats, Pekka and Paavo. (...)

I am V(...) A(...) and 17 years old. I have a wonderful family, two 8 year old twin-sisters and 10 year old brother. We have a wonderful, nice, very very kind and wice DOG. I love it very much. (...)

My name is A(...) M(...). I'm 18 years old. I have got a big sister who is 24 years old. I've got a cat who is very big and fat but I love him. (...)

My name is K(...) K(...) and I am 17 years old. (...) I haven't got sisters or brothers. But I have got a dog whose name is Bobby. He is very cute. (...)

My name is S(...) R(...). I'm a 17-year-old girl (...). I live in a semi-detached house with my parents and my dog. I also have one brother but he doesn't live with us any more. (...) When I have freetime I just relax by jogging with my dog, (...)"

"To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)

Subject: First communications to Teacher C1(...)

My name is Claire Stanton I live in Chesham (...). We have got four pets—one duck and three dogs. (...)

"From: COOMBE.GIRLS.ISM (YOJ007) Delivered: Wed 7-Mar-90 14:59 GMT Sys 11

To: School B

Subject: Environment Day (...)

In a family the average number of children is two to three. There is usually a family pet also. At least one parent in the family works, but now both parents usually work. (...)"

The next extract is an example of over-generalisation as a communication strategy (cf. Færch & Kasper 1983). As the student has not known the exact term (probably a canary), she generalised the concept by using a more general term 'bird' instead. Over-generalisation as a strategy is not very common in writing, because the term could have easily been checked from a dictionary.

"To: YOJ002

From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 8:57 Sys 10001)

Subject: 1st letter (...)

I'm a 17-year-old girl and my name is P(...) T(...). (...) I have a cat and a brother; in that order. And I also have a bird. (...)

In the following e-mail, the use of 'animals' may indicate that the writer did not remember or know the term 'pet':

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:13 Sys 12762 (2)

Subject: answers to george (...)

(...) What do you like to do in your freetime? Do you like sports?
Animals? (...)

Yours, A(...) and L(...) (...)"

On the other hand, the Finnish students could learn a precise term 'terrapiin' instead of just calling this pet a 'turtle':

"To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059

Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)

Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

I love animals as well. We have loads of tropical fish, two terrapins
and a lovely little hamster called Bertie. (...)

Bye, Bye Carol"

In the final analysis, however, the data gathered leads to the conclusion that pets were not important enough to be discussed in e-mail correspondence. When mentioned, they were almost always described with an adjective or compared to the rest of the family members. Some Finnish students, surprisingly, also mentioned that they did *not* have a pet.

7.1.8. Part-Time Jobs and Working Life

The question of part-time and summer jobs, future professions, and, in general, the importance of work is incorporated into Course 3 of the nationwide FL curriculum. As the fieldwork period continued from November (in School A) or January (in Schools B and C) till the end of May, it was probable that students would have a chance of exchanging ideas of part-time jobs and career prospects in general.

Two boys and two girls in School A, for instance, wrote about their possible summer jobs like this:

"To: NYE (134:NYE)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Thu 24-May-90 11:37 Sys 12762 (40)

Subject: letters from [School A]

We are students from [School A] and we are going to tell you about summerjobs.

It's rather difficult to get a summerjob here in Finland. Well, maybe we can tell you something about our experiences. When you want to get a job you have to read newspaper advertisements and just go and ask the employer for a job. They often say that they can't hire you because you are under 18 years old. If you get to a job interview they ask

you about your hobbies, character and so on. And then they tell you about the pay, working hours and the job itself. And it's also very important that you make a contract with your employer.

Usually you don't get the first job that you are applying for. You have to apply for lots of vacancies. We'll start with our summerjobs in June, after school has broken up. The working day is about 6—8 hours. The pay is about 20—25 mks/hour. The duties may differ quite a lot. For instance J(...) works in a big store as an assistant in all 'dirty' jobs. Often teenagers really work just as assistants. For instance we can work in stores, gardens, kiosks, as babysitters and so on.

We all go work by bike. The interests are often different. For instance I don't really like my job, but it's better than nothing. However, there we can see new people, get money and really work. We will spend our money on travelling, drinking and buying the things we want. We don't think we will do this kind of work in the future but we have to get money and working experience.

Best wishes, J(...), M(...), T(...) & S(...)"

"To: NYE001 (143:NYE001)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Thu 24-May-90 11:43 Sys 12762 (51)

Subject: answers from (...)

We are two girls from Finland. (...) Our summer holiday begins on the 1st of June. You see, it's not very far away. We are going to work the whole holiday and of course just relax and tan ourselves. (...)

M(...) and A(...)"

A number of Finnish senior secondary school students had a part-time job on the weekends or during the holidays, which is referred to in some of the e-mails, though no exact descriptions were always provided:

"To: YOJ002

From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 8:57 Sys 10001)

Subject: 1st letter (...)

My name is J(...) M(...), and I'm eighteen years old. (...) I often go to work during the weekends and school holidays. (...)"

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:13 Sys 12762 (2)

Subject: answers to george (...)

My name is R(...). I am an 18-year-old girl and I am in the second grade of our Senior Secondary School. (...) I am working part time at a cafe to earn my own pocket money. (...)"

Some Finnish students also wrote about their future job expectations, but apparently students in Forms 1 or 2 were not yet that in-

terested in future jobs as they would still be going to school for one or two more years:

* To: NYE018 (134:NYE018)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Fri 18-May-90 10:37 Sys 12762 (27)
Subject: stories from (...)

(...) My name is H(...) V(...). (...) I don't know yet what career I'll choose but I'm interested in a teacher's or a translator's work. (...)"

The best job descriptions were written by Mr Brown's vocationally oriented students (the CPVE group), who had their work experience during the fieldwork period. These students also voluntarily wrote about their future hopes. This was a fine contrast to general ('liberal') education provided by the Finnish senior secondary schools. At least the Finnish students could see how close studies and working life could be. Besides, many of the English students reported fairly enthusiastically what they had experienced during their work practice. This is how Mr Brown describes this practice:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 19:24 Sys 10001 (26)

Hi [Teacher C1]

Very many thanks for the letters from your students—really great! You would be amazed at the interest that has been shown by other teachers in the school, let alone the students themselves.

Unfortunately it will be a week or so before they can reply, for at the moment the CPVE group are out on 'Work Experience', that is they have been allotted a position at a business or facility in Chesham for three weeks. The jobs vary tremendously; trainee cook/chef, trainee travel assistant, trainee motor mechanic, classroom assistant in a junior school, trainee confectioner, trainee travel consultant, assistant housekeeper in a health centre, assistant in a printing business, clerical trainee and an assistant to an estate agent. We have to visit them to check their progress and they will return at the end of next week to relate their experiences to us.

(...) Keep up the good work!
Yours George."

Here are some comments by Mr Brown's students on the training period:

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)
Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

I have just come back from my work experience and had a great time working in a garage as a trainee motor mechanic, I was working with all blokes (men). (...)

For the past 3 weeks I have been doing my work experience, in a garage in Chesham as a motor vehicle technician. I have decided after the 3 weeks that I don't want to work in a garage. The work experience is part of the C.P.V.E. course. The course is basically for people who are not sure of what they what to do for a job. So it gives insight into different jobs. (...)

For the past three weeks I have doing my work experience. I worked in Chesham Travel Agency. It was great fun, I really enjoyed it. I intend to have a career in Travel and Tourism. (...)

I have just finished a three week work experience from school at a local print centre. It was really good fun. I didn't want to come back to school, because I was enjoying it so much. (...)

I have just come back from my Work Experience which I did for three weeks. I worked in an office doing all different things like using the computer for orders and invoicing. I was shown how office procedure was done properly and really enjoyed it. For our work experience we not supposed to be paid but I was paid 45 which really suprised me. (...)

For the past three weeks I have been on work experience at A.T Mays Travel Centre in Chesham. Now I have returned back to school I have changed my mind about my career, I have always wanted to work with childern but decided to go into the travel industry. Now I have worked in a travel agents I think I will work with children! (...)"

The same students also wrote about their present or future job prospects rather extensively, e.g.,

To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059

Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)

Last term I did a Motor Vehicle Maintenance Amersham College. Last term I did a Motor Vehicle Maintenance course, it was good fun ! This term there was nothing that I wanted to do at college so I just study at school. When I leave school I want to be a Travel Agent or work in Travel Agency. At the moment I have a part-time job at Waitrose Supermarket. (...)

Last term I did a Motor Vehicle Maintenance course in the morning and followed that in the afternoon with Typing, Clerical Skills and Word Processing. When I leave school I would like to go to college and study Travel and Tourism—because that is what I am hoping to

do as a job. At the moment I am working at our local Waitrose supermarket along with my friend Clare from the sixth form. (...)

The subjects which I do are Business and Information Studies, British History, European Studies, Maths, English Language and Literature. I hope to go to Amersham College to do a course called Junior Secretaries, which I am looking forward to. (...) I hope to work as a secretary or a receptionist when I finish college. I would also like to travel around the world. (...)"

7.1.9. Travelling and Transport

Even if some students mentioned that travelling was one of their hobbies, this theme was not widely discussed. One of the initiatives to talk about this theme came from the Coombe Girls. They also connected an environment issue to transportation:

"From: COOMBE.GIRLS.ISM (YOJ007) Delivered: Wed 7-Mar-90
14:59 GMT Sys 11
To: Teacher B
Subject: Environment Day (...)

TRANSPORT

Transport today is very important to us in our lives. We often take it for granted, just jump on a bus, hop on a train, catch a lift in a taxi when it rains!!!!

We have done a survey about how 21 of our class mates travel to school. These are our results.

TRAINS	2	TAXIS	0
BUSES	10	BIKES	1
CARS	3	WALKING	5

As you can probably see most pupils travel to school on the bus, the reason why, is that most people live some distance away from the school.

But do they like it? Three people like going on the bus. Two people like going on the bus sometimes. Four people hate going on the bus.

But why, we ask ourselves? Well the answer is that the buses are dirty and there is a lot of pushing.

How can we improve this situation? Lets tackle the dirt first, for one thing we could make 98% of the buses non-smoking, this would cut down most of the dust. There could be a higher penalty for dropping litter, and the bus drivers should clean their buses more often. That solves the dirt, now onto the pushing! Pushing can be solved by more patience and more buses going on the same route, every five minutes. What's the transport like where YOU live?

By Leanna Parham and Angharad Ringrose. (...)"

Students in School A had already written, among other things, about transport in their home town:

"24.11.89 [To 10001:YSO007] (...)

Some of the students live pretty close to the school, but most of us are bussed to school from farther than 10 kilometres. (...)"

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Mon 12-Feb-90 14:12 Sys 12762)

Subject: more messages (...)

In [our home town] you can move very easily from place to place. You can use all kinds of public transport. Usually we take a bus or hitch-hike. But when we have a lot of money, we rent an aeroplane. (You know, we have an airfield just around the corner.) (...)

Written by M(...) and K(...)"

The English participants had also mentioned transport in some of their messages, but only as a minor detail, paying no special attention to it, e.g.,

"To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)

Subject: First communications to Teacher C1 (...)

Chesham itself is a small town (population circa 23,000) at one end of the Metropolitan Line, part of the London Underground railway network. Housing is not cheap in Chesham, mainly because people can commute to work in London from living in a pleasant, rural area. (...) I live in the South-east corner of England in a town called Chesham. The town is quite small with a population of about 25,000 and its about 40 minutes away from London (by train). (...)"

A German student probably spoke for many when complaining how stressing going by bus can be:

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015

To: School C

Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

Every morning I've to hurry to go to the busstop because my way takes 10 minutes till I arrive. On my way I often see the full buses which are passing me because I haven't reached the busstop. If I finally arrive the busses don't pick me up because they're so full and I've to wait for another one. (...)"

Two girls in School A wrote about their future trip to Mallorca (later changed to Greece) and asked Teacher A to transmit it to their partner school:

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Fri 26-Jan-90 12:59 Sys 12762) (...)

THE TRIP

We are going to Mallorca at the end of April. You may ask :WHO WE???Well , we might just as well tell you that.M(...) and K(...) will take part in this trip (THATÉS US) and M(...)és grandmother and M(...)és mother.What a trip it will be!

You may ask :how ?We are not going to fly there with our wings.We shall take the aeroplane! Gosh, it will be so exciting!

When we get there , we are going to study everything about Spanish culture and the island of Mallorca, and the history of Mallorca as well. And after an hourés examination, we'll be running to discos and parties all week through. The sun has a major role in our trip.If it doesn't shine, we will have to go to parties in the daytime too.

We think we will be able to learn how to speak Spanish and we also believe that we will use some English too.

Shopping is a way of spending time before dinner, as we have dinner at about 9 p.m.

We think we will have to take lots of yoghurt with us,as it helps against sunburns.

And when the night falls and the shadows grow deeper and people are preparing them selves for the night,(They are taking a nap!)K(...) and M(...) will be sitting in the balcany, listening to soft music and dreaming about the night which is ahead.

BEST WISHES,M(...) AND K(...) (...)"

A couple of examples of "wishful thinking" appeared in the students' messages:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:13 Sys 12762 (2)

Subject: answers to george (...)

My name is S(...) P(...). I am a seventeen-year-old girl living in (...) and dreaming of Egypt. (...) I believe in the human rights, the power of love and that Marilyn Monroe was really murdered. I am tremendously fascinated by the life of Marilyn, the pyramids, the moon and the art of painting. (...) I do not know yet what my goal in life will be but I am sure there is one. At least I want to see as much world as possible. I love traveling and probably will be heading somewhere next summer. Whether it is going to be Egypt, Paris or London I do not know yet. (...)

Love, R(...) & S(...)

Egypt seemed to unlock some reminiscences in the English student who received the above e-mail:

To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)
Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

Hi R(...) & S(...)

Thanks for the letter you sent me. Your lives really sound interesting compared to mine. Egypt is supposed to be a swell place because my Nan (grandmother) went there two years ago and she really enjoyed it. I hope you get there one day. I've been to Florida and seen Disney World and other places around the area of Orlando. That was the first time I had been abroad, except for a couple of day trips to France. One of my friends is mad on Marilyn Monroe, she was always drawing pictures of her. But now she has left the sixth form and gone to Art College. (...)

Well I'd better wind this letter up. Hear from you soon.

Bye, Bye Carol (...)

Two of the Finnish girls had been to London and took advantage of this as a means to strengthen the link between them and their British partner school students:

To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:13 Sys 12762 (2)
Subject: answers to george (...)

My name is M(...) and I am seventeen years old. (...) I enjoy listening to music, going to the cinema, reading and meeting my friends, but my favourite hobby is scouting. Last summer I was four weeks in Britain. I was with my girl guide friends and we were at a scout camp in Scotland. I travelled around Scotland and also visited London. You have never been in Finland, have you? (...)

Love, M(...) "

To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 11:57 Sys 12762 (1)
Subject: More answers to George (...)

My name is S(...) S(...) and I am 17-year-old girl. (...) My one and best hobby is scouting. Last summer our group was in Scotland at the international scoutcamp, Discovery-89. (Have you heard about it?) It was near Perth. So I've visited London two times. The first time in spring 1988 it was a kind of school trip. It took one week and we stayed at local families. I enjoyed that very much. Last summer after the camp we

stayed at the youth hostel in Holland Park. We just did shopping and went to Tussauds and so on. I like London very much. (...)

Best wishes and Happy New Year.

Yours, S(...) (...)"

On Campus 2000, a questionnaire was published concerning the London underground system, which I forwarded to the participating teachers. To my mind, this questionnaire could have been used in our classes as well, and perhaps transposed to the Finnish equivalents.

"To: [Teachers A, B, C1, and C2]

From: TELLA.SEPPÖ (TBX850) Delivered: Mon 16-Apr-90 9:17 Sys 12762 (4)

Subject: Campus/Noticeboard (...)

Subject: underground railways

From: YTA007

Posted: Tue 20-Mar-90 9:48 Sys

QUESTIONNAIRE TO SCOTLAND

Hello my name is terry scudder and i live in barking london. i go to a school called eastbury comp. which is in barking and one of the lessons i take is information technology and in this lesson i am doing a study on london underground and what i need to know from you, is your opinions on london's underground system. also i would like to know some information on your underground railway system and how they differ from our underground system. so could you answer the questions provided

- 1) have you ever been on a london underground train ?
 - 2) what do you think of them ?
 - 3) do you think they are comfortable ?
 - 4) do you think you get your value for money, when you ride on the underground ?
 - 5) do you think the stations are clean and tidy ?
 - 6) do you think your trains are more tidy and better equiped than our trains or do you think they are more worst than our trains ?
 - 7) which trains do you prefer ? reasons for your answer.
 - 8) what is your opinion on our railway system ?
 - 9) what is your opinion on your railway system ?
- yta 007 (...)"

To sum up, the topic of travelling and transport remained rather fragmentary, though a few messages were sent and received and ideas compared.

7.1.10. *Vive la Différence!*

Most of the students participating in the fieldwork period were young adults in their mid-to-late teens. It would be natural to assume that the level of sexual consciousness would be pretty high among them. In the following it will be analysed whether anything of this reflected on the messages they sent and received.

As a special theme, issues connected to this subject were only taken up in Teacher B's class on Jan. 17th, 1990 when all the themes were being negotiated between Teacher B and his students. Group 1 (a group of six boys) included aids and safe sex in the list of their themes. A month later, when some of the girls wanted to start writing about a new theme, sex was suggested by some of the girls. Nothing much was written, however, either by the boys or by the girls. Other teachers or students did not make any suggestion to deal with this theme.

Three American boys mention, *en passant*, dating, which is an important part of American youngsters' lives:

"#1 15-MAY-1990 07:47:21.82 NEWMAIL
From: IN%"SCHWAEGERLÉvms.macc.wisc.edu" "MICHAEL
SCHWAEGERL"
To: TELLAÉcc.Helsinki.FI (and Teachers A, B, C1, and C2)
Subj: Letters from Wisconsin (...)

Dear Friends in Finland,

We are writing to you on behalf of our tenth-grade English class. We would like to let you know what kids in the United States do for fun. (...) Going on dates is another popular thing to do. Although the men traditionally pay, women's roles have been changing, and it is becoming more common for girls to pay half or even all of the date. Although everyone's tastes are different, most kids find these activities enjoyable. Joel Walker, John Roberts and Andy Olson.

Some student profiles included remarks of a hobby and the opposite sex. These may be harmless and juvenile-like exaggerations but they can also indicate the level of arousal among these particular students. They certainly show that the students have had enough confidence on their teacher's letting these messages be transmitted.

"To: YOJ002
From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 8:57 Sys 10001)
Subject: 1st letter (...)

My name is M(...) H(...). I am an eighteen-year-old boy. (...) I like surfing and hot girls. I am also interested in films. My favourite film is Dirty Harry, because it is very exciting. (...)"

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)
Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

Hello all you fun loving cool doods out there!!! My Name is Vicki Clusker and I live in Chesham where all the boring people live. My best friend is Karen Harrison who some of you are writing to. Believe me we have the same interests which definitely means BOYS!!! (...) Well apart from boys and listening to music I like going to the cinema and going to the local night clubs although I'm under age. I like to go down the pub every now and then. I also enjoy skiing but I'm not that good I only managed a two star with merit award when I went skiing 2 years ago. Well got to go, love Vicki"

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)
Subject: First communications to Teacher C1 (...)

Hi there my name is Karen Harrison my friends call me squinch because I am so small. (...) My interests (apart from BOYS! BOYS! BOYS!) is reggae music and pop music in general. My favourite Album is Technotronic. I go to the cinema fairly often and enjoy watching videos. My favourite film is Beetlejuice."

Karen's letter above inspired three Finnish boys to answer in a way that made Teacher C1 frown upon their message before finally sending it to Britain:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 11:57 Sys 12762 (1)
Subject: More answers to George (...)

Hi Karen!
We are P(...), P(...) and T(...).
(...) Our hobbies (apart from BOYS! BOYS! BOYS!) are quite normal. P(...) is a cucumber, T(...) plays with his Scaletrix car-race game and Capsela chemistry set. P(...) plays with himself.
T(...) listens to Bangles because the singer has a good bottom. P(...) is a heavy addict with long hair and no brain. P(...) listens to lambaada and even has a pink lambaada skirt.

We read that morals and religious values are taught in your school. What does it mean? Do you have to believe in Jesus? We think that they are just making it up to get money for the church. The real secret truth is held by the holy BANANA. You can save your soul by sending your money to T(...).

Best wishes, P(...), P(...), and T(...)

Teacher C1's remark:

After some thinking, I finally let his letter be as it is. I really hope it does not hurt anybody's feelings about anything (...). So please let me know what you think about this, your teacher and you students yourselves. By the way, we also teach religion in our school. If a student does not belong to Church, he or she can choose Ethics instead. (...)"

As to religious and moral values, the boys refer to Mr Brown's own introduction to his school (see Chapter on School 7.1.3.1).

The rest of this exchange of highly loaded sexual messages will be discussed later in this report, in connection with censorship (Chapter 7.2.1). One of Mr Brown's students' letters illuminate the direct sexuality which characterised this girl's work place.

"To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059

Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)

Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

Hi R(...) & S(...) (...)

I have just come back from my Work Experience which I did for three weeks. I worked in an office doing all different things like using the computer for orders and invoicing. I was shown how office procedure was done properly and really enjoyed it. For our work experience we not supposed to be paid but I was paid 45 which really suprised me. During the three weeks there was a bit of adult sense of humour on one of the order forms, which startled me but it was also very funny, it had in brackets (EXCLUSIVE OF ERECTION) which made everyone laugh in the office. (...) Bye, Bye Carol (...)

It may be important to notice that this girl wrote to two Finnish girls; if the recipient had been a boy or a group of boys, perhaps the contents of this message would have been modified. It can also be assumed that sexually loaded messages would not have been written in groups consisting of both boys and girls. As explained in Tella (1991), all dyads and small groups in the participating schools were one-gender groups, either boys or girls, no mixed groups turned up in any of the Finnish classes.

7.1.11. Environment Issues

One of the themes a lot of students were concerned with consisted of various environment issues, starting from one's near surroundings and going on to global issues of pollution, acid rain, deforestation, etc.

A good example of how these issues can affect the students' everyday life came from Germany:

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015
To: School C
Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

Our school was a real joy for us but since we we have to go to other schools it is for me like a nightmare. (Our school was closed because of an asbestos problem so we were sent on to other schools). (...)"

In the Finnish FL curriculum (Anon. 1985), this theme is covered during Course 7, i.e., in Form 3 (the last year of Finnish senior secondary schools). From this angle, environment issues were beyond Form 1 and 2 students' curriculum. However, this surely was a theme many of them wanted to talk about. For instance, Teacher A's partner school students started right away with environment issues:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: YSO007 Delivered: Tue 21-Nov-89 20:01 Sys 10001 (130)
Subject: our first letter (...)

Environment Project (...)

We are doing an Environment project, and we want you to send some information on what are the main environment issues are in Norway. (...)

In West Sussex the main concerns are litter and pollution by household products and the possible destruction of the countryside by so many new people. (...)"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: YSO007 Delivered: Mon 27-Nov-89 20:19 Sys 10001 (194)
Subject: message to [Teacher A] 2 (...)

Environment—Part 2

Hello again! It's Darren and Matthew here again. We are doing something about tin cans in Britain. We are collecting cans at Tanbridge to help unfortunate babies who are in incubators. Each can we save, gives one pence towards the fund. The cans HAVE to be aluminium. To see if the can is aluminium there is simple test. The test is to use a

magnet, if the can does not stick then it's aluminium. The money helps to buy equipment for the babies. If you have any cans that are aluminium then you can send them to us and help those babies who need the money!! There is a television program in Britain called Blue Peter which is also trying to save cans. Our nearest depot for dropping off our cans is a superstore called 'Tesco'. Then they are collected. (...)"

One of Teacher A's girls wrote a long composition about environment in danger which was sent to Britain later in the spring (see Tella 1991, 196). Teacher B's students also received e-mail from Britain about environment:

"To: TEACHER B
From: SCHOOLS.IT.UNIT (YOJ002) Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 14:51
Sys 10001)
Subject: Message and files from England (...)"

The School Environment and the Litter

The school is split up into equal 'litter areas'. This is an area which a class has to keep free of litter. A class may decide either to make litter squads for each day or to pick up litter when passing the area. This does not always work as many people avoid the area. The school has been collecting aluminium drink cans to save the environment outside school, because the small supply of aluminium in the world MUST be saved. This is done by re-cycling them.

In the past years, this country has not been very concerned about the environment around it. Lakes and rivers are an example of this, especially where fishermen are concerned, because many birds were being killed by discarded lines and lead weights. They have made a law which restricts angling shops from selling lead weights. Aerosol cans have now been made environmentally friendly, this means that they have cut out most CFCs which are harmful to the Ozone-Layer. There is still the problem of factories dumping toxic waste into streams and rivers which kills the river life.

Wayne Sayers & James Addicott, 2KD, Tiffin Boy's School. (...)"

Equally, Teacher C2's partner school teacher's group was reported to be in action:

"To: Teacher C2
From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 15:29 Sys) (...)"

Wednesday afternoon here is the time when students are involved in a wide range of 'additional' studies. Everything from College sport to computing and conservations. Eight students are out this afternoon clearing mud and weed from a large pond in a nature reserve! (...)"

In School C, Teacher C2 worked for several weeks in order to prepare an English-language report on the Baltic Sea project, which had been going on in that school and between several countries on the Baltic. She had been working with the corresponding subject teacher in School C and even interviewed a number of students in order to get their personal views on this project. However, finally, Teacher C2 made the conclusion that the material she was trying to work on was too technical or biology-oriented to be exchanged with Mr Milford's students. So this idea came to nothing, it simply fell through. It was a pity as School C obviously had a lot of experience in this field and it would probably have been a major contribution to the Finnish newsletter as well.

7.1.12. International News

One of the major contributions of the social network built during the fieldwork period between Finland and eight other countries was the fact that different kinds of messages could be transmitted to and fro. It was mentioned earlier in this report how student-to-student correspondence widened certain aspects of personal-level contacts. Another dimension was the news in general and the question of what sort of topical data were transmitted on the networks. This chapter is concerned with what sort of news arrived from and about Britain and several other countries. The benefit of this news was obvious; first, it complemented the picture the students got from the textbooks they were studying; second, it also provided up-to-date views to news mainly selected by the students themselves.

Mr Mundt's students dealt with several topics, such as ambulancemen's strike, redevelopment of their home town, and poll taxes. These e-mails were thoroughly studied in School A, and some replies were also sent back to Britain.

To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: YSO007 Delivered: Tue 21-Nov-89 20:01 Sys 10001 (130)
Subject: our first letter (...)

Ambulancemen Drivers Dispute

In England most of the ambulancemen are working to rule, that is they are only doing the jobs their contract of employment tells them they must do. This means they must attend 999 (EMERGENCY) calls and accident cases but they don't have to transfer patients from one hospital to another. Also the ambulancemen's union are not letting the ambulancemen use their two-way radios properly and so now the ambulancemen's management are not using the ambulancemen,

they are using the police and army ambulances instead. Now many ambulancemen are working without pay, especially in London. Talks between the union and the ambulance men to increase their pay are still going on.

By Jonathan Carrigan. (...)"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: YSO007 Delivered: Mon 27-Nov-89 20:19 Sys 10001 (194)

Subject: message to [Teacher A] 2 (...)

Redevelopment of Horsham

The development of Horsham started in 1987 and has been going on for two years.

The development is a joint venture by Horsham District Council, Sun Alliance Insurance group and Norwich Union Insurance. The development of Horsham includes the construction of new offices for Sun Alliance and Norwich Union and new roads funded by the council. The offices make up a total of 200,000 sqm. The main part is a new shopping complex in the middle of town which is made of 37 shops and undercover pedestrian walkways which are patrolled by security guards. As the development is on such a large scale, room was needed in the town so part of St Marks church was demolished but the spire was left standing as part of the development. Other buildings were knocked down to make room for the new roads.

By David Lott and Richard Potton (...)"

"From: YSO007 Delivered: Mon 26-Mar-90 13:33 Sys 10001

To: Teacher A Subject: more news from Horsham

TEST ON AMBULANCEMAN DISPUTE

The long running ambulanceman dispute has finally come to an end with an agreeable formula being set. The formula included a pay rise over two years agreed at 15% but did not include a pay mechanism for future years which would have ensured an inflation based pay increase. The formula also sets out that more highly trained people such as PARAMEDICS get proportionally more money than less trained people.

Jonathan Carrigan"

Jonathan was answered by three girls from School A. They only took up one detail of his letter—the pay rise—but also expressed their view of highly trained people deserving higher salaries. In this sense, Jonathan's letter served well as a catalyst; it was reacted to, with founded opinions.

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Tue 24-Apr-90 20:00 Sys 12762)

Subject: News from (...)

Dear Jonathan,

We are glad to hear that the dispute has finally come to an end. In Finland disputes like that are usually settled in a couple of weeks. The pay rise seems a bit high, but of course the ambulancemen are very happy about that. We also think that highly trained people should get higher salaries, and as far as we know, it is like that in our country as well.

Looking forward to hearing from you

H(...), M(...) and M(...)"

E-mail also turned out useful when some people wanted to transmit news from teletext pages on Campus 2000. This kind of use of topical news could well act as a newspaper; incoming messages should be treated as real news. Besides, this news could provide students with modern vocabulary concerning political news.

"From: B.R.G.X.V. (YNP023) Delivered: Sun 25-Mar-90 14:38 BST
Sys 10001

To: B.R.G.X.V. (YNP023)

Subject: from Hampshire Database (...)

NEWS FROM TELETEXT PAGES

MAJOR ADMITS MISTAKE OVER POLL TAX RELIEF

Chancellor of the Exchequer John Major has admitted making a mistake in the Budget over community charge relief. Speaking on TV-am he said he should have anticipated the response when he doubled the savings limit before poll tax rebate came into effect. Scottish MPs were angry that it would not cover people in Scotland who paid poll tax last year. The Government has now set aside #4m to help them. Mr Major said: 'We have responded to the sense of grievance. It was a mistake not to have anticipated the response.'

(...) THATCHER SAYS SHE IS HERE TO STAY

Mrs Thatcher has said she has no intention of standing down as Conservative party leader and intends to fight the next general election. In an interview in the Sunday Telegraph she said: 'There is still much to do. I am very fit. I have lots of stamina.' The Prime Minister hinted that there would be no general election before 1992. She spoke of a full legislative programme for the next two years. Asked about matching Lord Liverpool's 15 years as PM, Mrs Thatcher said it was 'a nice target to beat'. (...)"

The Finnish FL curriculum emphasises the fact that students of English as a first foreign language should get acquainted with the major regional variants of English. In senior secondary schools, this viewpoint includes at least Britain, the United States of America,

Canada, Australia, and some elements of English spoken in other countries as well (international English).

In addition to the profiles of the American students, which comprised a lot of facts, opinions, and ideas of American society, geography, history, and even politics, several other messages described one or further perspectives illuminating the USA. What also counted was the fact that these perspectives were forwarded to the Finnish students more or less directly, most of them were written specifically for the Finnish audience, some of them consisted of Global Village contributions intended for an international audience. This way these contributions meant a lot more to the Finnish participants than similar kinds of facts gathered from other media. What was equally important, even if it was not always taken advantage of, was that the Finnish participants could *any time* ask for further explanations and specifications.

The fieldwork period of the research project took place in the middle of a violent and turbulent process of political developments in Eastern Europe. When fieldwork was launched, the Berlin Wall had just been opened, and the former German Democratic Republic was to collapse in an unexpectedly rapid tempo to everybody's amazement. No wonder German students mainly wrote about these developments in their newsletter (Dec. 1989—Feb. 1990). I would like to argue that the comments received from German students via e-mail about this democratisation process efficiently show the strength of an international communications network; genuine views from those concerned could be received, studied, and commented upon in no time. This kind of up-to-date material about political and social developments many-sidedly complement the printed textbook materials students usually study in FL classrooms.

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015
To: School C
Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

(Note: These texts were written in December answering Tony's first call. These texts and a lot more were done in handwriting because these students didn't have access to computers at their host schools. Ulrich)

Christoph Stais

New freedom

The new freedom between the GDR and the FRG doesn't affect me so much because I'm still at school, and I don't work so I don't have to search for a new place where I can work, but when I'm out of school it is a big problem. I think many skilled men of the East side will take

the jobs we need ! The emigrants 'the East side families' have to work hard to get houses, jobs and food because they come with nothing to West Germany and want much. So they have to take all kinds of jobs. They go to the red cross and ask for jobs, food and clothes to wear ! I think many emigrants will stay in Germany because they have helpful relatives here, so they get a new start. I'm sure that some emigrants who don't have relatives in Germany will go to other countries where they can make a good new start. I have a special opinion about the new freedom because I was born in Silesia. I'm sure all these people are German. They speak the same language, they have nearly the same tradition. I think West Germany is a helpful country. Many people told me that some want to stay in the GDR because they want to live in a communist-system or they have their own property in the GDR so they don't want to leave the property. I heard some East Berlin people who don't want our way of life inspite of the bad situation in the GDR. The people cannot buy anything they need and want! I have two opinions about the new freedom between East and West Germany: on the one side it is good that the relatives of the west side can meet the relatives of the east side. On the other hand I feel bad, because I think when there is a new federation between, the GDR and the FRG a new war could happen because Germany wants the old borderlines. I think some politicians like Mr Stoltenberg are unhappy about the new freedom because he doesn't want to pay the 'welcome money'. It is too expensive for Germany. He likes the people of the east side but he doesn't want to pay that 'welcome money' all year round. (...)"

The German situation also activated the Global Village so that the animator, Mr Leigh, attempted to organise a direct e-mail link with one of the East-German schools:

To: Global Village schools
 From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Sun 11-Feb-90 13:21 Sys 10001 (47)
 Subject: GDR one day link

Hi Everyone,

This information has just reached me from Tilo in Germany. I know Karl-Heinz (Austria), Ulrich and Terry (almost!) as well as Dawlish were involved in a fascinating exchange last November with Rostock about the Berlin Wall coming down. It may be that others would like to link with Magdeburg on February 20. If you do, and if you have created the latest mail.ref, then by typing 'cc global' after K-H Keunecke's mxb a copy will come to all of us. When you receive a reply type 'fo global' at the Action required: prompt and we will all see it too. That is: When sending a question to Magdeburg, at the To: prompt type -

15:UKU027 cc global <Enter>

When you receive an answer, at the Action required: prompt type -
 fo global <Enter> -- Tony

Subject: Questions DDR

STUDENTS FROM GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC ANSWER QUESTIONS

Dear friends ,

You probably know that the situation in Germany has changed completely since Nov. 9,1989. Since then the freedom of travel has been guaranteed. 12 million people from the German Democratic Republic (17 million inhabitants) have come to visit their relations and friends or just to have a look around here. So we are also glad to announce that a group of students from Magdeburg is going to visit Humboldt-Schule from February 17 to 24.

On Tuesday, February 20, they are prepared to answer questions concerning the situation in East Europe and the German Democratic Republic. Please send your questions or comments that day or the day before to: 3015:UKU027 (HUMBOLDT SCHULE, KNOOPER WEG 63, 23 KIEL) We hope it is of some interest to you to get in touch with pupils who can report about the life behind the 'iron curtain' from their own experience.

Regards Karl-Heinz Keunecke (...)"

"Cc: Global Village schools

From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Mon 19-Feb-90 23:35 Sys 10001 (15)

Subject: Hello Magdeburg Students

Thank you for the opportunity to send a message and a question to you. The past few months have been very exciting and we have enjoyed several exchanges with students in Germany to learn first hand of what it is like. My school is on holiday this week but we discussed your visit and would like to: What single thing do you wish to see, to do or to have as a result of the political changes in East Germany on the following dates - immediately? within a year? by the year 2000? Best wishes from the staff and students of Dawlish School, Devon, England.

(#

Sorry if this message is not clear. I have a problem with a bad telephone line.)"

Even if no answers were ever distributed to Finnish schools on the basis of this initiative, the exchange of letters was followed eagerly in our schools as well, as Teacher C1's letter indicates:

"To: Global Village schools

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 22:27 Sys 12762 (6)

Subject: Feedback (...)

Ulrich's newsletter from Germany was very, very interesting and we discussed some points about school and the East-German situation,

but my students were not yet ready to write anything in response. Thanks anyway, Ulrich. (...) Teacher C1 (...)"

The questions related to Eastern Europe and especially to the Baltic States were clearly among the preponderant political issues during the fieldwork period. Other international news were received and discussed as well.

The Hampshire database provided the Global Villagers with a lot of international news, e.g.,

"From: B.R.G.X.V. (YNP023) Delivered: Sun 25-Mar-90 16:42 Sys 10001 (159)
Subject: from Hampshire Database (...)"

AUSTRALIA HAS CARETAKER PM

Australia has a caretaker prime minister after the country's closest election for 30 years. After yesterday's inconclusive voting, Labour prime minister Bob Hawke said he would remain as caretaker until the final result was announced. He said he would be able to stay in office for a fourth term, but admitted there might be a hung parliament. But Andrew Peacock, who leads the alliance of conservative parties, was optimistic that he would be able to form a government within a few days. (...)

HUNGARIANS GET FIRST FREE ELECTION SINCE 1947

Nearly eight million Hungarians are voting today in the first free election since 1947. About 1,600 candidates from 29 parties are standing for the 386 seats in parliament. Opinion polls indicate that the communists who instigated democratic reforms and hoped to gain their reward at the ballot box will be disappointed. The Socialist party formed by communist reformers is expected to get about 10% of the vote while the unreformed communists are expected to do worse. (...)"

The role of this news can be seen as quite important in the process of internationalisation. Studying some international news just received would be quite a fresh start even for a language teacher. At the same time, these items of news complement adequately the FL curriculum in that the target language is used to transmit genuine factual information.

7.1.13. Weather

Weather—somewhat notoriously—is a topic much talked about in the British Isles in particular. It often belongs to "small talk" or "so-

cial chat" topics that help to get along with the interlocutor and which in a way fill the silence that may arise before the two (or more) communicators or transceivers find another topic. Although its nature usually is descriptive, in written e-mail communication part of its role may also be phatic or contact supporting. From this perspective, it only sounded natural to include some remarks about weather in one's correspondence. However, the weather became an important theme during the fieldwork period for several reasons. First, exceedingly hard storms swept over Britain at the beginning of 1990, which directly affected not only the telematic structure of the network built between Britain and Finland but also the physical conditions in English schools.

At the very beginning of the fieldwork period, a piece of "human interest" news was received from Britain :

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: YSO007 Delivered: Mon 27-Nov-89 20:19 Sys 10001 (194)

Subject: message to [Teacher A] 2 (...)

A RECENT RECORD ATTEMPT IN HORSHAM WAS FOILED BY THE TYPICAL BRITISH WEATHER—RAIN! THE ATTEMPT WAS TO FORM THE LONGEST HUMAN CENTIPEDE. ABOUT 2 WEEKS OF PREPARATION HAD GONE INTO THE RECORD ATTEMPT, BUT ON THE DAY OF THE ATTEMPT, THE HEAVENS OPENED, AND THE RAIN POURED DOWN. HOWEVER, ABOUT 50 BRAVE PEOPLE TURNED UP, BUT SADLY NOWHERE NEAR ENOUGH PEOPLE TO MAKE THE EVENT SUCCESSFUL. THEY WERE HOWEVER NOT TOO DOWNHEARTED TO TURN DOWN THE REQUEST FOR HELP ON THE NEXT ATTEMPT, SCHEDULED FOR SOMETIME EARLY NEXT YEAR. (...)"

Teacher A combines weather and other news in her letter to Mr Mundt:

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Sat 10-Feb-90 13:16 Sys 12762)

Subject: greetings (...)

Dear Paul,

We are sitting in Seppo's computer class and decided to send a short mes message to you. My pupils have been preparing messages for your students and we will mail them next We are looking forward to hearing from you soon. (...)

The weather in Finland has been awful indeed, rain almost every day. We haven't been able to ski at all in southern Finland, and even the holiday resorts in northern Finland suffer from lack of snow. How is your winter? I read about the storm you had a couple of weeks ago.

As you see, Seppo is a conscientious teacher. He makes us do various thing things at the same time as we are writing, and therefore this note is extremely illogical. I hope you don't mind. (...)

Yours, [Teacher A]"

Mr Leigh wittily contrasted the topic of weather, widely discussed by his students, with some more important events in international politics:

"To: Global Village schools

From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Sun 11-Feb-90 18:45 Sys 10001 (132)

Subject: Letter from Dawlish (...)

It is an exciting time for free people throughout the world—the fall of the Berlin Wall and re-unification of Germany, the release of Nelson Mandela. But here in UK we are being very British and it is the weather that we talk about!!! We have had storm after storm. Here are some headlines we wrote:

WET WEATHER WITH WIND

For the past week we have been having atrocious weather and strong winds up to 110 miles per hour.

Maria & Emily

WILD WIND IN SOUTH DEVON

Two weeks of non-stop rain and wild winds mean people have been left homeless and buildings are standing on their last leg. Trees are uprooted and havoc caused.

Karen & Daphne

CALAMITOUS COMMOTION OVER STORM STRUCK SCHOOLS: SLATES SOAR THROUGH STORMY SKIES

A suburban school was ripped apart by the formidable storm that struck Devon.

Lisa, Christine & Shane

=====

For Carla the storm in December was the worst:

On the night of the floods last year in December we were at my auntie's house. It was chucking it down with rain all day. When we tried to get home we found that the road was blocked by floods, so we turned round and took a different route home. We went through about 5 floods up to 2 feet deep each time. When we were about one mile from home our car stopped and wouldn't start again so we had to walk the rest of the way.

We got to the top of the hill and discovered that the road had been flooded but the water had been pumped away. Our next door neighbour was cleaning out the mud from her house so we guessed that we had got flooded and rushed round to the back. There was about 4 feet of mud on the back path and there was a coating of water on top. We

got into the house where my grandfather was putting mud in buckets. All our kitchen and lounge/diner had a foot of mud and water all over it. We started to clear up and eventually got to bed at 12.30am.

At the moment we are taking out our cupboards and having a new kitchen put in. Action can take a long time but hopefully we will be back to normal soon. I hope noone out there got badly flooded or damaged in the storm?

Recently we have lost some tiles off the roof and had a little bit of water in our back door but not as much as last December. I don't think I will ever forget that night.

Carla Derry (...)"

The changing weather conditions were also reported by the Coombe Girls:

"From: COOMBE.GIRLS.ISM (YOJ007) Delivered: Wed 7-Mar-90
14:59 GMT Sys 11
To: TEACHER B
Subject: Environment Day (...)

OUR WEATHER

Last summer we had the HOTTEST summer we had ever had. Record temperatures, of 100 degrees where reached. WINTER seemed to be more like a summer, but about 11 days in a row were very windy. Winds of 90 miles per hour were reached. Trees were up rooted, tiles were blown off the roofs and some people were tragically killed in these terrible storms. These were the most terrible storms we have ever had, NO the most terrible winds were in October 1987 (in recent history).

BY NATALIE LEXTON AND SOPHIE MALIK
COOMBE GIRLS SCHOOL ENGLAND. (...)"

The weather was adroitly and succinctly referred to by one of Mr Brown's students in her answer to a Finnish girl's letter:

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)
Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

Hi M(...),

How are you? (...) I see from your letter you have visited Britain I hope you enjoyed your stay (I bet it rained). (...)

Love Claire (...)"

Teacher C1 gave a rather detailed description of Finnish weather to Mr Brown just before the Finnish sports holidays in February:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
 From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 13:16 Sys 12762 (1)
 Subject: From Finland to Mr Brown

Hi George

I am writing to you again because tomorrow we are going to start our skiing holidays which will last to 25 February. Actually it is not easy to ski in southern Finland because there is so little snow. Especially cross-country skiing is almost impossible. there are some slalom and downhill slopes operating also in southern Finland (they use artificial snow too) and the weather forecast has promised more snow (which can turn easily into sleet and water because of the exceptionally high temperatures at the moment). Many people here in Finland think that the present temperatures (about 5-7 degrees above zero centigrade) are a sign of the greenhouse effect, but the scientists don't yet agree with them. (...)

All the best from us, [Teacher C1] (...)"

The Finnish participants full-heartedly agreed with Mr Jonsson on his feelings after a dark and gloomy winter:

"2 IN%"tokiEkopasker.IS 16-FEB-1990 no subject (file transmission)
 It made me feel warm inside this morning to receive your friendly greetings. It is a fine start of a day to get a 'good morning' from friends on both sides of the Atlantic in addition to the colleagues'.
 As I hammer this on the keyboard the sun is shining outside. This is our second sunny day since last in November. You can hardly imagine the feeling to have the sun back after the darkness of the long winter months. (...) Thorir Jonsson"

Teacher C2's partner school teacher, Mr Milford, proved a specialist in weather affairs, so discussing weather between him, Teacher C2, and myself became more than casual or phatic; in fact, it became serious and deep-going, integrating detailed meteorological observations into our correspondence. Mr Milford's school had a satellite weather system of their own, which made it possible for them to collect weather data from the Meteorological Office via their e-mail service, direct raw data from each weather station including the mid-Atlantic weather ships. In fact, Mr Milford's school had almost as much access to raw weather data as the professional forecasters in Britain! The exchange of weather experiences started when Mr Milford vividly described one of the storms that had swept over Britain:

"To: TEACHER C2
From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Tue 30-Jan-90 14:31 Sys)
Subject: Message Time!

Messages can now be sent again! The storm which passed over us last Thursday left us without telephone lines and electricity. All now restored so we are back in business!

You may well have read about the storm. 45 people were killed, mainly by falling trees, stonework etc. The College had to shut and send everyone home—the strong winds (gusting to 100mph) blew the windows across the entrance hall, showering glass everywhere. Many houses have been damaged, losing tiles, sections of roof and wall, fences etc. Road signs have been blown down and one local petrol station lost all of its forecourt roof.

My home village has seen many large trees blown over. At one place, ten large trees were blown down in a line leaving a site that looks like a huge Christmas tree sale! We lost all electricity at home—power went off when a tree fell across the main pylon poles and was only restored yesterday, leaving us completely without power for 5 days.

Yesterdays weather satellite photographs showed the last remains of the storm passing over Helsinki. What happened there? Did you have strong winds, rain, snow etc.

Today it is all beginning again. The wind speed is increasing and Storm Force 10 is predicted for this afternoon. Students are watching the satellite pictures avidly! The wind is expected to reach 80mph with gusts of over 100mph.

It really is a day to stay indoors!

All best wishes

Peter"

I replied to Peter just four hours later, with a few comments on his description:

"To: YDO076 (10001:YDO076)
Cc: Teacher C2
From: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850) Delivered: Tue 30-Jan-90 18:54 Sys 12762 ()
Subject: Reply to: Message Time! (...)

Dear Peter,

Thanks for your e-mail. Really nice hearing from you.

<Messages can now be sent again! The storm which passed over us <last Thursday left us without telephone lines and electricity. All now <restored so we are back in business! You may well have read about <the storm.

Quite a storm! As if you had been somewhere in the Far East, for instance. I remember what Georges Mikes once wrote about the British

weather ('A fair compromise between rain and fog'), but, seriously speaking, this storm was quite different—something quite catastrophic. My wife and I watched BBC Europe the evening after the storm and fully realised the strength of the wind. It was very sad to see all that havoc caused by the storm.

<Yesterdays weather satellite photographs showed the last remains of <the storm passing over Helsinki. What happened there? Did you <have strong winds, rain, snow etc.

Yes, we did have a storm warning here, but apparently the storm only hit up to Stockholm, not further north-east. There was a strong wind at night, but nothing to write home about. Well yes, on second thoughts—some cellars were filled up with water as the sea level rose a couple of metres in next to no time.

The centre of Helsinki is very low in fact. The Presidential Castle and the Town Hall, for instance, are only a few metres above the sea level. So if the greenhouse effect gets stronger, we are sure to get drowned (after the Low Countries!). (...)

Best wishes, Seppo (...)"

In his reply, Peter Milford detailed their weather satellite system:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Wed 31-Jan-90 14:33 Sys)

Subject: Reply to: Reply to: Message Time! (...)

It was indeed quite a storm, all the more memorable as this one was during the normal working day unlike the 'great' storm of October 1987 which struck Southern England around 3.00am when few people were about.

I was interested to see that you are able to view BBC TV. Is that via a satellite transmission or does your local service re-transmit BBC material?

We too are quite low lying, actually right on the waterfront. We had some flooding recently but nothing too drastic. Some areas of the New Forest (parts of Lymington) were quite badly affected when the sea broke through the sea wall and flooded the lower town to a depth of some 5 feet (a few weeks ago now). We had a flood warning alert for the high spring tide last night, but no real problems as the wind had dropped by then.

We do have our own satellite weather system. A dish aerial is pointed due south and at a 30 degree elevation to pick up transmissions from the Meteosat 4 orbiter. The signals are decoded and fed into a card mounted inside one of our Acorn Archimedes micros. This processes the signal and displays an image on the screen. The image can be scrolled, zoomed and enhanced so we can get a fair indication of what is happening. Images can be saved to disk as whole images or as com-

pressed sprite files for export to drawing, word-processing, desk-top-publishing and image enhancement software.

The raw signal is in the GHz range, nothing too special and only needing a simple antenna and intermediate frequency changer to receive. We bought our equipment as a complete kit for around about 1,000 pounds. (...) I will send some printouts of the recent storms to you, together with images of the Middle East and Brazil—copies to [Teacher C2] as well.

All best wishes, Peter"

Teacher C2 also thanked Mr Milford for the information and the weather pictures:

"To: YDO076 (10001:YDO076)

From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Sun 11-Mar-90 12:26 Sys 12762 (28)

Subject: a letter from Teacher C2 (...)

Thank you very much for the most interesting handouts on Meteosat. I rushed to give copies of them to our physics teacher. He was impressed by the facility you have. His immediate inquiry concerned the cost, i.e. how much you have to pay for the use of Meteosat.

These handouts were of particular interest right now, since the weather has been most weird this winter with all those wild winds making us alarmed and worried. (...)"

The weather was indeed a frequent and serious topic, which was understandable as Mr Milford was a Physics teacher and his school had exceptionally good equipment in this respect.

Teacher C2 passed the weather pictures to her colleague, a teacher of Physics. The only handicap with the weather discussions was that most of them took place between teachers and myself, not between students, even if some of them made a few comments on the weather in their profiles in particular. On the other hand, they had a chance of studying genuine weather satellite pictures, which widened the usual scope of material used in FL lessons. The e-mail communication environment also proved flexible in that enough time could be dedicated to these discussions as they were considered important by the participants.

7.1.14. TV, Music, and Pop Stars

A popular topic concerned watching TV or video cassettes, listening to music, and talking about pop stars. This topic was linked to Course 2 (leisure time in general), Course 5 (information and technology), and Course 6 (music and art). The students first introduced

each other into what kind of TV channels were available in their home towns. This assignment integrated easily into the FL curriculum, which dealt with mass communication. What I expected the students to do was to evaluate the programmes they used to watch, not only list them as such. However, not many remarks on the quality of the programmes were made. Even fewer contributions tied the recipients into the message, by asking, for instance, for their opinions or examples of their favourite programmes. As quite a few of the programmes originated from US or British television companies, it was probably assumed by the Finns that foreign students would know them already. Lexiswise, the students got acquainted with vocabulary which they could use more generally as well. On the whole, the Finnish students dealt with these topics more frequently than the foreign students:

"To: YS0007 (10001:YS0007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Tue 9-Jan-90 9:55 Sys 12762 (1)

Subject: Subject:TV 8.1.1990 (...)

Television in Finland

We have three TV channels in our area, but in [the neighbouring town] you can watch 16 channels, because there's a cable-TV. Finnish TV-programs are rather good, but they show only a few good films in a week. News comes out seven times every day and the weather forecast comes out eight times on Finnish channels. Popular serials here are Miami Vice, Sledge Hammer, Dallas and Dynasty. I think Finnish serials are poor.

S(...) (...)

We have six channels. Three Finnish channels and three foreign ones are of them. French and two of them are British, Super channel and Eurosport. We like music programs and serials like Miami Vice and L.A. Law best.

Films that we usually rent are comedies for young people and sometimes some thrillers. Sometimes we watch TV a few hours a day but some other days not a minute.

The series that we watch are all British or American. We don't like Finnish series very much because they are a little stupid.

I(...) and A(...) (...)

In Finland we have three channels which everybody can see. But in town are as we have a lot of other channels. In [a neighbouring city], for example which is ten kilometers from here, there are sixteen channels: Sky, Super, Filmnet, Eurosport, Worldnet and some others.

We don't know exactly what kind of programs you have there in Horsham but we suppose so that they don't differ much from ours. Typical TV-programs are here: News comes out seven times a day, dif-

ferent serials like Dynasty, Matlock, Crime story, Dallas and so on. Sports comes out every day and the Finns love it (we are a national sports maniacs). Films are also shown every night.

M(...)"

Exceptionally, a student would write a more evaluative analysis of his favourite programme, e.g.:

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Fri 9-Mar-90 11:55 Sys 12762 (65)

Subject: messages (...)

My favourite TV-program comes in favourable watching-time. It's not too long and short enough. If you are depressed, when you come home from school, and you don't want to do anything useful, you can always turn the TV on and watch this funny program. Sometimes, but very rarely they really can tell the truth about the future, but it's only a good guess. A little while ago they got a new huge and developed computer which gives them a possibility to tell about future 10 days ahead. As you have already guessed (I suppose) the program is the Weather Forecast. I really think that it's the most interesting program in television.

When you think more of Weather Forecast, you really understand, why it's so funny and relaxing. A short, fat and very wise-looking man waves his hand and tries to show where the depressions go to. Usually the man stands in front of the map, so you really can't see anything else. The Weather Forecast is at the same time a comedy-program and it also provides important knowledge that you can talk about with your friends next morning. (...)"

From the teachers' point of view, students' contributions provided them with up-to-date examples of what bands or musicians were in vogue at the moment. This is one of the areas in which printed learning materials tend to be old-fashioned.

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Tue 9-Jan-90 9:55 Sys 12762 (1) (...)

We like music programs, like Rockstop, Jukebox and Playback. We record music-videos on the video. We have many music-videos by Madonna but of course by some other artists as well. We watch Tv serials like Jake & the Fat man, Return to Eden, McGyver, L.A. Law, a Finnish quit called Ariadnen lanka and Alf.

We'll tell you about Ariadnen lanka, where people try to decide who is the murderer, but the story is just imagination, not true. If somebody guesses who the murderer is he/she wins money. The winner raises a card and there is the sum which he/she has won.

Best wishes, H(...) and S(...) (...)"

"To: YOJ002
 From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 16:09 Sys 10001)
 Subject: Schools2 (...)

In our school music doesn't play a very big role. We have only two hours of music a week but instead of that pupils can choose art. Some concerts are organized for everybody but usually they aren't very good.

There is a college of music in [our town] where you can study all kinds of instruments. But most people just listen to music.

Mostly we listen to bands known all around the world: Bros, Bon Jovi, Alice Cooper, Scorpions.... There are many good bands in Finland too but they aren't known in other countries. Some of them sing in Finnish and some in English. Here are some examples: Eppu Normaali, Miljoonasade, 22-pistepirkko, Cliffters, Gringos Logos, Stone, Pkkset and Paska.

About ten famous bands a year come to Helsinki to give concerts. The bands which have visited Finland once usually come again but there are bands which never come. The prices of the tickets are rather high. (...)"

A rather detailed description was written for the Finnish newsletter by three boys of Teacher C1.

"To: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850)
 From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 14:13 Sys 12762 (341)
 Subject: Finnish Newsletter (...)

Popular music in Finland

Nowadays youth listen mostly to disco-, rock- and heavymusic. The most famous bands are: Guns 'n' Roses, Skid Row, Aerosmith, Metallica, Jason Donovan, Phil Collins, Alice Cooper and so on.

Here in Finland music from the 70's is very popular, too. For example Pink Floyd (old records), Led Zeppelin and The Who.

Of course we've some good Finnish bands, too. For example Michael Monroe (ex Hanoi Rocks) is from Finland. The only bands who have succeeded in foreign lands are: Hanoi Rocks, Stone (speed metal) and Havana Black. Hanoi Rocks was very popular in the early 80's, but when their drummer died in a car accident (the driver was Motley Crue's vocalist Vince Neil) the band broke up. Stone had been in Mexico lists and they have had some concerts in USA.

Havana Black have warmed up Great White. Recently we have had very good groups having a concert. We have had Pink Floyd, Motley Crue with Skid Row, Ozzy Osbourne, Bon Jovi, Alice Cooper with Great White and Britny Fox, Anthrax, D.A.D., King Diamond, Bonfire, Eric Clapton.

Of course, we have good new bands, who aren't popular yet. They play every kind of music, but mostly heavy and rock music. We have

some popular bands here, who sing Finnish and so they can't be popular abroad like Sleepy Sleepers, Eppu Normaali and Juice Leskinen. We have sex bombs, too. For example Kikka, XDöwho wants to be like Samantha Fox.

This year the following bands are coming to Finland: Yngwie Malmsteen, Tanita Tikaram, Tina Turner, Rolling Stones, The Who and Tom Jones.

Finnish music's future: There will be more and more heavy bands and they will be better than now. Also they have more opportunities to play in foreign lands.

Made by: J(...), S(...) and T(...) (...)"

While consisting of quite a range of names, this letter also makes some comparisons between Finnish and foreign artists. It also emulates young people's way of talking; when they cite a lot of names, they assume their interlocutors know whom they are talking about. The names, in a way, bridge the conversation. This kind of writing cannot be regarded as purely descriptive; rather, it includes some features of expository writing. It could, perhaps, be called teenagers' technical slang which is so crowded with names of bands and musicians that it is mostly incomprehensible to adults not initiated into this kind of music.

7.1.15. Computers and Technology

In the Finnish FL curriculum, Course 5 deals with technology. As this course was going on or started at the beginning of the field-work period, it was also natural that there were numerous contributions concerning this topic. Besides, given that the whole research project was built on computer-mediated communication and the use of e-mail, it was no wonder computers and Information Technology were discussed at various levels. On the personal plane, students told about how they used computers in everyday tasks. A lot of discussion was focused on solving technical or technological problems brought about by the man/machine interface or the telecommunications software or hardware. At the same time, teachers exchanged ideas and experiences about the pedagogical uses of computers and e-mail in FL teaching. Word-processing was also one of the major subtopics.

In the following, a number of examples will be given from different viewpoints in order to illustrate this topic. The Campus noticeboards, for instance, often consisted of messages from this area. From the viewpoint of teaching strategies, examples accessible to teachers and students represented non-nomothetic, functional, and

message-centred features in that they talked shop while paying little if any attention to grammar rules and, at the same time, met specific communication goals by conveying IT-specific information.

"To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2
From: TELLA.SEPPÖ (TBX850) Delivered: Mon 16-Apr-90 9:17 Sys 12762 (4)
Subject: Campus/Noticeboard (...)

Subject: HELP LOGO USERS PLEASE....
From: HFE116 Posted: Tue 10-Apr-90 15:15 Sys 1
I have an honours degree student who would like to send a questionnaire out to logo using schools (don't worry, it's quite short, I know how much paper you get daily !!!) about their experiences with Logo in any machine environment.
Interested? Send me a mail item saying so.
Thanks. I am on HFE116
Stephen Heppell (...)

Subject: Asian script word processors
From: YLM001 Posted: Mon 19-Mar-90 11:17 Sys 1
Does anyone know of any Asian script word processing, other than Allwrite, which will work on a Nimbus or IBM compatible computer? (...) Mashud Haque (Careers Service - Bradford) (...)"

Teacher C2's partner school teacher wrote about the way his students used computers. This detailed description helped the Finnish teachers realise what sort of possibilities were accessible. At the same time, its function could be defined as being useful guidelines concerning some basic computer skills (English for special purposes).

"To: Teacher C2
From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Fri 6-Apr-90 1:49 Sys 10001 (147)
Subject: Reply to News and Requests (...)

Most use the word processor to produce the final report. Scraps of paper and hand-written notes are transcribed to a draft report which is generally discussed with the subject tutor. A second draft will then be made, taking the discussions into account before the final version is produced. This final version is often fully DTPed with diagrams, photographs and graphs all included. Our Postscript laser printer has been in great demand—the queue forms at 8.00am and it is still in demand at 7.00pm. when we throw them out!

WP skills
Enter text documents and correct spelling

- Format paragraphs, using justification and ragged right margins
- Format to required line length
- Use tabs; character or decimal
- Move, copy and delete text blocks
- Set headers, footers, page numbers
- Use text highlighting (Bold, Underscore, Italics)
- Save text file
- Load text file
- Print text file
- Merge files

Disk management skills

- Format new disks
- Display directory
- Open and close folders, directory
- Create new folders
- Copy files from folder to folder
- Copy files from disk to disk
- Backup Disk
- Delete files, folders.
- Change file access attributes (...)"

Part of the technical talk concerned the CAUCUS conferences on Campus 2000.

To: School C (and the Global Village schools)
From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Wed 16-May-90 23:47 Sys
10001 (10)
Subject: Caucus2

It was good to see [Teacher C1] (Finland) being the first 'villager' to join the JOLLY conference. Can all you early summer finishers make contact there before you start your holidays? Please ask if you want any assistance. (...) best wishes - Tony (...)"

Mr Leigh, as the responsible moderator, instructed us to use the latest version of CAUCUS towards the end of the fieldwork period. The activity of the Finnish teachers was clearly demonstrated as Teacher C1 was the first foreign user on the CAUCUS conference.

7.1.16. Crosscultural Differences

This theme was closely connected to Course 6 (various aspects of culture). The network established to link the Finnish and foreign schools together provided an opportunity to compare different cultures at various levels. Crosscultural differences materialised in

various ways and it was partly due to the teachers to point out some aspects associated with these differences. Observing cultural differences had an indirect bearing on students' knowledge of the target countries. As will be exemplified below, direct questions about culture in the target countries did not lead to a rich exchange of ideas. Rather, it was the whole infrastructure on which the field-work period was based that reflected various cultural aspects that proved meaningful.

After I had discussed the matter with Teachers A, B, and C1 at the beginning of February, I decided to send the following e-mail to the partner schools and to the Global Village schools around the world to initiate some discussion on this topic:

"From: TELLA.SEPPPO (TBX850) Delivered: Wed 14-Feb-90 8:33 Sys 12762 (5)
Subject: Culture--on St. Valentine's (...)

Most Finnish Senior Secondary School teachers of English will soon start a course whose main theme is CULTURE.

Teacher A from School A (12762:TBXXXX) asked me to ask you to send us brief descriptions of what "y o u" and your students understand by 'culture'. She would like to start the course by discussing various interpretations of this difficult concept.

Culture? Civilisation? Yes, how should we define culture? What kind of aspects should we include in our teaching?

Culture?

- * A particular system of art, thought, and customs of a society?
- * Artistic and other activity of the mind and the works produced by this?
- * A state of high development in art and thought?

Pop culture? Highbrow culture? Subcultures?

In the Middle Ages, a general to his troops: 'Bring with you everything that even slightly reminds you of culture.'

(A famous citation:) 'When I hear the word "culture", I ...' (...)

Looking forward to your ideas of culture... Seppo"

Except some personal greetings and a few humorous turns of phrase from Tony Leigh, practically nobody reacted to the cultural side of this letter. Obviously this was something the teachers were not ready to discuss, which was a surprise and a disappointment to me and to Teacher A in particular. This is what Mr Leigh retorted:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 0:25
Sys 10001 (5)
Subject: Reply to: Culture--on St. Valentine's

Culture is the green growth on the unwashed canteen floor! Will organise a response as soon as I catch up on the last letter!!! Seriously—it is delightful to be bombarded by so much from so many new contacts. - - Tony"

Teacher A was still worried about the cultural aspect of the project. She turned again to her British partner school teacher to start discussing the topic, with no obvious results, alas.

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Thu 22-Feb-90 14:20 Sys 12762)
Subject: greetings

(...) Could you please ask your students to define CULTURE very briefly, as our next course will deal with culture, and the kids seem to have a very limited picture of the whole concept. One of my students is coming to a village near Bournemouth next summer and she would very much like to meet some of your students. Perhaps we could make some arrangements for her. (...)"

However, towards the end of the fieldwork period, some contributions to this theme came from the USA. Some of them dealt with schools, others were more focused on cultural matters:

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 20:45 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: stories from Brandeis

Life In New York

Hello my name is Jeannette Prado. I've been living in the US all my life. (...)

I also want to know some of the school functions that the students run in your school.

Yours truly, Jeannette Prado

P.S.- Do you have any relatives in the other side of the Berlin wall? And if you do, are you going to see them soon? Since they are going to tear down the wall?"

The world really changed during the fieldwork period; the fall of the Berlin wall (on November 10th, 1989—just nine days before the fieldwork period was started) was one of the first episodes felt and experienced during fieldwork. Jeannette's question about Finns be-

ing beyond the Berlin wall was an appetising starting point for a class discussion.

The question of audience awareness was discussed in Tella (1991). The students had an opportunity to write to young people of a similar age, but they did not always fully realise the cultural differences, and the fact that Finnish artists they were depicting in their letters were not well known in Britain or elsewhere. A few groups in Form 1 (Teachers A and C1) worked on national holidays and on Finnish pop music, but it seemed to me that students of this class level were not sufficiently mature to meet this kind of challenge. Or they would have had to be motivated in some way to understand that their contributions were sent to several countries all over the world.

Culture as a concept was not very much discussed, after all. Cultural awareness of global interdependence and a greater sensitivity towards foreign cultures were probably heightened, however. Besides, various materialisations of culture (news, poetry, literature, etc.) were widely covered. Some of these materialisations will be exemplified in the following.

7.1.17. Poetry

In the 1980s, FL curricula in several countries tended to overemphasise factual, business-like attitudes towards the foreign language to be studied. Major problems, such as global pollution and famine, were focused upon and thoroughly discussed. This kind of approach risked to minimise the artistic and fictive use of the target language. Little by little, as exemplified in Anon. (1985), the expressive side of a person's language proficiency regained some of its domain. It was again realised that language could be used for other purposes than purely practical or pragmatic. The fieldwork period showed that students from every country participating in the e-mail project loved writing poems and even analysing poetry. Though most of the writers were girls, also some boys produced poems to be sent to the partner schools. Poetry is associated with Course 6 contents, underlining aesthetic values in particular. Some examples of Japanese poems, analysing happy school life, were already given in Tella (1991, 180—181).

The following examples represent the poems either written or analysed by the students. Mr Leigh's students, for instance, wrote poems to be transmitted all over the world:

"From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Sun 11-Feb-90 18:45 Sys 10001 (132)

Subject: Letter from Dawlish (...)

South Devon is a very beautiful part of England. Many artists come here to paint and many poems have been written. Four 14 year old Dawlish students have contributed to a new book just published which contains poetry written by Devon school children. It is called 'Devon Hundred'.

A Seagull Over Dawlish by Lia Giovanovits

The piercing screech of a seagull
Breaks the silence
As it scavenges for food.
Its pearl white body swoops

Down to the icy sapphire sea.
A splash of jewels on smooth pebbles
As the sun sets below the horizon
Leaving the sky in a fiery blaze of glory.

The railway behind
Is one long shadow,
Meandering into the cliff
Of towering red rock.

The Warren In Winter by Rosie Doyle

Cold, desolate shore;
The Mean wind blowing stray hair.
An old man wearily pulls his
Already exhausted body
Towards the town,
Ghost-like in its stillness.

Wrapping a thin coat more closely around himself
And shivering against the cold,
He turns his back on the sea
Which roars and crashes
Taking out all its fury on the beaten rocks.
Great waves of power
Curling, dangerous beckoning.

Shaldon by Ben Voysey

Lonesome waves skip to Shaldon Narrows.
Boats nod aimlessly to each other, as a gull cries
Out whilst in flight.

More waves yap, and curl, dragging pebbles back
 Along their continual path.
 Light flashes, seeking attention.
 Far off land silhouettes the horizon,
 Broken now and then by a passing yacht.

Dartmoor by Rebecca Castle

A wilderness of heather,
 Snowy tors.
 The wind
 Sharp, piercing.

Towering,
 Rock above Rock,
 Still, cold.

The mist descends,
 Icy fingers
 Playing with the clouds.

=====

We hope you have enjoyed our letter and look forward to receiving
 yours soon.
 Students of Dawlish School, Devon, England."

One boy of Teacher A's analysed T. S. Eliot's production "The
 Waste Land and Other Poems".

"To: YSO001 (10001:YSO001)
 From: Teacher A Delivered: Fri 27-Apr-90 11:48 Sys 12762 (96)
 Subject: message

J(...) H(...) 8th April, 1990 (...)

Thomas Stearns Eliot (Born 1888: died 1965) is one of the most remarkable English poet. He was the greatest imaginst and was awarded the Nobel Prize of Literature in the 20's Å Gosh ! I can't remember the year exactly ! Å. Imaginism was the style of literature and the first well known work of this style was Eliot's poem: The Waste Land (Published in 1922).

The imaginsts were disappointed to culture and they wanted to change poetry: both the form and the content. In his poets Eliot is free from symbols and he uses a new technique—stream of consciousness. The expression of imaginism is like a straight line, it is based on our sense.

The Waste Land is Eliot's mainwork. It is poem, so it isn't clear as the daylight, it is clear as—like chaos. It's not easy to read it and it is even much more difficult to understand it. Like any other poem, The Waste Land reflects the cultural climate of the time. So it is important to examine Eliot's background, because it helps us to understand his meanings and because the poem is full of quotations from the Bible,

Dante's *Divina Commedia*, Shakespeare's works and references to unknown places.

Atmosmosphere is cold, icy. It's like a long, long moonwalk with Vergilius, under the red, bloody moon. Walk through the battlefields of the First World War, through the fields of destruction and horror—through *The Waste Land*. The days of Arthurian knights are gone. There's no honor and glory anymore—nowhere.

No illusions are left.

'Unreal City,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.'

Eliot uses his poetic license to edit his poem that it is almost like a short story. The revolution of poetry was started.

Another noteworthy poem from Eliot is *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*. The theme is love, but we don't see J. Alfred Prufrock in poem. We are J. Alfred Prufrock. We see what he sees and we feel what he feels. Prufrock is a businessman, English gentleman, wealthy, noble. He has had many chances, but he is a coward. He missed them everyone.

'And indeed there will be time
To wonder, "Do I dare?" and "Do I dare?"'

'For I have known them all already, known them all -
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;
I know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a father room.
So how should I presume?'

Prufrock is an island. He don't dare to build the bridges of love between him and other people. So he will die as a lonely man. He is like Hamlet, but he never try. He is like Scrooge, but there won't be Christmas Eve to him—never.

'I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.
I do not think that they will sing to me.'

'To: Teacher A
From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Tue 1-May-90 2:01 Sys
10001 (11)
Subject: Thanks for the essays

Thanks for the interesting essays. It is many years since I read the *Wasteland* and if it is any consolation I didn't understand it either! Did you know T S Eliot was very fond of cats and wrote some poems called *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*—very much easier to understand but perhaps not to write a thesis on! (...)

Best wishes - Tony Leigh"

In School B, a group of girls in particular wrote a lot of poems, which partly filled up the time they were waiting for foreigners to go on with their Never-ending Story. Girls also liked writing poems when they could spare a few moments between other assignments.

"To: YOJ002

From: Teacher B Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 16:09 Sys 10001)

Subject: Schools2 (...)

- LOVE IS RED
- LOVE IS BLUE
- LOVE IS SOMETHING BETWEEN ME AND YOU!!!!!!
- WAR?
- WE HOPE THAT IT WILL NEVER COME BACK AGAIN.
- BECAUSE OUR FATHERS HAVE FIGHT FOR OUR FREEDOM.
- AND THEY HAVE BEEN KILLED.
- SAUNA?
- IT IS SOMETHING THAT FINNISH OWNS.
- HEAT. STEAM. 'LYLY'¹.
- PLEASURE AFTER THE HARD DAY. SATURDAY EVENING.
- NATURE?
- WE DON'T PAY ATTENTION FOR IT, BEFORE WE DON'T HAVE.
- IT'S TIME TO DO SOMETHING!!!!!!!!!!!!!! (...)"

"To: YOJ002

From: Teacher B Delivered: Mon 12-Mar-90 16:26 Sys 10001)

Subject: Contributions (...)

POETRY

I feel, You feel, We feel...
What do we feel?

I love you, You love me, one, two, three,
Please kiss me!!!

- War??
- What do you say??
- BOMB!!!!
- WHAT!!
- MASSACRE!!!!
- PEACE!! NO WAR!! DO YOU UNDERSTAND???

¹ 'Lyly' should be read as *lõyly*; the 'ö' having dropped out due to faulty defaults in the telecommunications software.

- ARMS! WEAPONS! BOMBS! EXPLOSIVES!
 - ARE YOU A HUMAN BEING????
 - NO I'M NOT. I AM A RUSSIAN!!!
 - YES, YES! AND I AM THEN A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR!!—
 OH, THAT I AM!! I'M LITTLE STUPID ANIMAL...

CAN'T BUY ME LOVE
 IT'S NOT WARM ENOUGH TO GO OUT WITHOUT YOU.
 I HAVEN'T ENOUGH MONEY TO GET YOU,
 I HAVEN'T GOT MUCH LOVE LEFT BUT LET ME KNOW WHAT
 YOUR APPROXIMATE TIME OF ARRIVAL IS...

HE HAS A BAD CONSCIENCE, BECAUSE I MISS YOU SO MUCH.
 YOU SHOULD HAVE PITY ON ME...

THESE POEMS HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY ALL OF US TOGETHER,
 N(...) K(...), H(...) J(...) AND A(...) M(...) (WE ARE THREE YOUNG,
 ATTRACTIVE AND DIFFERENT GIRLS).
 THESE POEMS WILL TELL YOU SOMETHING ABOUT OUR IDEAS.
 WE HOPE YOU'LL ENJOY THEM. (...)"

"To: YOJ002
 From: Teacher B Delivered: Mon 12-Mar-90 16:26 Sys 10001)
 Subject: Contributions (...)

DONT LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT!!!!
 I CAN'T SAY ANYTHING TO YOU, BECAUSE YOUR EYES STOP
 ME ALL THE TIME!!!

THE MORE I SEE MEN
 THE MORE I LOVE MY DOG!!!

IT'S NO USE CRYING OVER SPLIT MILK.
 SO DON'T CRY AFTER ME, WHEN I'M GONE.

ALL WAS QUIET—I COULDN'T HEAR A SOUND.
 ONLY MY HEART BEATING AGAINST YOUR CHEST!"

Two of Teacher C1's girls wrote a poem from a frog's viewpoint:

"To: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850)
 From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 14:13 Sys 12762 (341)
 Subject: Finnish Newsletter (...)

POEMS FROM FROG'S EYEVUEW

Sitting on a water-lily
 Bubble is tickling stomach
 Sun is drowning to the
 pockets of cloud

Jump right to darkness
 a small talk with
 a pike

under the bark of the
great pine on
cliff along the shore
ant is having dinner
just having
intellectual orgasm

On the side of the little pine
is growing beard lichen
gallop of reindeer to the
lakeshore of the pathless wilderness
a moment of eurythmy with wolverine
foggy second and you're alone
with your dead calm thoughts
soughing of wings
rush through the clear summernight
dead rat
no more dysmenorrhea

A(...) & N(...) (...)"

Although the US school in Wisconsin did not contribute extensively to the fieldwork period due to some initial technical and logistic problems, what they sent to Finland was of high quality, also giving the Finnish students a chance to appreciate some highly personal poems. Mr Owen's students from Canada also sent some superb poems to be distributed among the Finnish teachers (Teachers B, C1, and C2) before they finally chose the school to collaborate with. (Cf. *Appendix K*)

What were the themes students dealt with in their poems? In addition to some "matter-of-fact" topics, such as their own town or school or some typical features of their own culture, such as sauna in Finland, quite a range of themes were touched upon: problems of growing up and going steady, young love and marriage, but also anxiety and fear for being left alone. War and nature were also discussed, in a very maxim-like fashion.

Stylistically, a number of methods were utilised, such as over-using punctuation marks, starting new sentences with a small letter or using capital letters throughout the poem. The overall effect of most poems is usually built on striking contrasts, and this was well simulated by the students, e.g., when they contrasted seeing men to loving one's dog. Much of their poetry could be derived from the tradition of stream of consciousness, as no particular poetic patterns were followed. All in all, most of the poems appeared fresh and richly contributed to the exchange of ideas between young people of several countries.

7.1.18. Literature

Literature (short story; novel; play; lyrics) belongs to Course 6 to be studied as the third course in Form 2. In this sense, it was part of the fieldwork period as well. However, literature only forms part of the contents of Course 6 (see *Appendix A*). Not very many contributions were dedicated to this theme, especially as reading and interpreting literary texts was not chosen as a special theme between Finnish and foreign schools. The theme was first suggested by Mr Lawrence to Teacher B, who was not quite convinced:

"Originally [Mr Lawrence] suggested discussing English literary texts, which they obviously thought we would be doing in our English studies, so as to be able to compare our respective perspectives on English literature. Fairly soon this suggestion was replaced by suggestions like comparing attitudes towards recent events in Europe and how our newspapers report them. Another possibility suggested was sending to Kingston some creative work, such as stories, poems or articles, for them to review. All in all, I think as time went by they had to settle for something less than they had expected in the first place. But also, I don't think the promise of revision ever came true." (Teacher B, questionnaire, May 1990)

In Britain, studying literature is much more common than in Finnish senior secondary schools, so the above suggestion was most natural. Teacher B also received a description of the school library in the Tiffin Boys' School:

"To: TEACHER B
From: SCHOOLS.IT.UNIT (YOJ002) Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 14:57
Sys 10001)
Subject: That last file died!! (...)

The Library

=====

An essential part of Tiffin School is the library. Not only is it important, it is extremely helpful.

It is comprised of many books, covering a wide range of subjects and pastimes including:

English Literature, the Sciences, Sports and General Fictional stories. All of these books aid us in our studies and help us to gain enjoyment from reading them.

Up to a maximum of three books are allowed to be borrowed from the library for up to one week. This enables us to use them at home as well as at school.

As well as being used for reading interesting books, the library is also an excellent place to do revision, since the room is almost silent, as with all libraries.

The library is open before school and during the lunch-break and these times of opening are very convenient. Everyone in Tiffin School is extremely grateful to all those involved in keeping the library going, and we wish them every success in future years.

By Mark Sabey and Vernu Navarathnam,
2KD, Tiffin School."

A girl of Teacher C1 wrote a long and detailed description of Finnish literature (see Tella 1991, 193). A boy of Teacher A analysed T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land and Other Poems" (referred to above in this report). The most widely disseminated and the most fruitful theme dealt with happiness. It was discussed by the students both in poems and in prose. As a single topic, "Happiness" was absolutely the most popular one. A number of examples will be given below, as most of the schools participated in writing something about this theme, introduced through the Global Village:

"From: LUDVIGSBORGS.SKOLA (YNF024) Delivered: Tue 17-Apr-90 20:24 Sys 1)
Subject: TOPIC NUMBER 3 !!!

Dear Villagers,

Just as on 'FOOD' I would like you to talk it over with your pupils and send comments, questions, hints and so on to me, and I will try to summon it up (a lot faster this time I assure you) and send you the entire material together with a summary. I thank you in advance for your co-operation.

JOY and HAPPINESS

What is joy ? What is happiness ?

For a new-born baby, it is the warmth at its mother's breast.

For one seven-year-old kid, it is a little warm puppy.

For another one, it is the pleasure of having enough to eat.

For one 13-year-old school-boy, it is being best at an exam.

For another one, it is not being worst at the same exam.

For one 17-year-old girl, it is to hear that HE loves her too.

For another one, it is to feel that The Lord loves her.

For one young man, it is to know he hasn't have to be a soldier.

For another one, it is to kill another enemy to save his country.

For one young woman, it is to get married.

For another one, it is to get a divorce.

For one man, it is another unopened bottle of whiskey.

For another one, it is saving people from alcoholism.

For one old woman, it is living despite all the pains.

For another one, it is to die to get rid of the pains.

For me, it is

How do you feel when you are happy ?
 Do you feel the same when you are happy on another occasion ?
 Do the same thing make you happy next time ?
 Can you feel happiness because I have succeeded ?
 Does joy mean the same to everyone ?
 Are there things that make us all happy ?
 Can you share your happiness with other people ?
 Do you have to spend money to get happy ?
 Can you wake up a sunny morning and be happy just because of the weather ?
 Are there, in fact, a lot of 'ordinary' things that give us happiness ?

I think there are lots and lots of questions you could ask yourself about joy and happiness, and lots of answers too on those questions. (...)

.....
 What do you think about this topic ? I hope you would like to talk it over with your pupils and send me their thoughts (and your own), and let us see if there are some things that mean joy and happiness to people in Finland as well as in the USA and GB and Germany and

Is it possible to let me have your reactions within a week, and your answers within three ?
 Lots of greetings, Roger (...)

Some of Teacher A's students wrote a few answers to the request above just after May 1st. The letters were sent either to their British partner school or to the US partner school:

To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)
 From: Teacher A Delivered: Fri 4-May-90 10:38 Sys 12762 ()
 Subject: Happiness (...)

If you love somebody
 who loves you back
 and you hold each other's hands
 in darkness
 without saying anything
 because silence says more
 than all the words in the world
 could ever say—that's happiness. (...)
 L(...) K(...) from 1a"

To: NYE001 (134:NYE001)
 From: Teacher A Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 14:41 Sys 12762 ()
 Subject: Hi from (...)

Happiness!!

Happiness is the feeling you have when you have everything all right.

Happiness is an optimistic point of view in small problems of your life.

Happiness is: You want to hug the World when it kicks you on the head.

Happiness is the feeling that you have when you notice that you are enjoying the warmth of the Sun and singing of the birds.

May your lifes be full of happiness!

O(...), M(...) & J(...)"

The theme was also caught by Mr Mundt, who had not sent much to School A for a long time. Therefore the abundance of the messages received from his students greatly delighted Teacher A and her students in mid May.

To: Teacher A

From: YSO007

Delivered: Fri 18-May-90 20:07 Sys 10001 (215)

Subject: [Teacher A]: happiness from Horsham (...)

We both like reading good books, eating, and watching interesting TV programmes. Alison is happy on a day out, on her birthday or at Christmas.

Susan would be happy if people would stop annoying, teasing and humiliating her and let her get on with her own life.

Mr Chapman (our headmaster) is happy when everybody in the school is behaving themselves.

Gemma is happy when she is eating. Angela and Caroline are happy when they look nice and have good friends.

HAPPINESS IS

Happiness is finding a good friend

Happiness is a present to send

Happiness is falling in love

Happiness is

Happiness is a warm summer day

Happiness is sun-bathing in May

Happiness is peace in war-time

Happiness is

Happiness is saving a life

Happiness is free from strife

Happiness is a cigar called Hamlet!

Happiness is

Susan and Alison

Happyness is

KOI CARP :Koi carp are happy when the sun is out so they can sun bath. They like being feed twice aday.

MY DOG :my dog is happy when he goes for a walk in the park.

I find motorbiking and jumping fun. I go to my grandad's farm because he's got a scrambling course over there.

Fishing makes me happy and so does shooting.

My cat: My cat is happy when he drops his scents everywhere and when he sleeps in the washing.

Daniel, Shane, Steven, Simon (Nobby), David

FRIENDS!

John Lane loves to be insulted. He gets on a high if you insult him, badly. Being insulted makes him happy. Everything makes Holly happy. She loves to have raspberries blown at her. Happiness is her middle name! (...)"

"To: Teacher A

From: YSO007 Delivered: Fri 18-May-90 20:20 Sys 10001 (112)

Subject: more happiness (...)

sorry we've taken so long
hope this makes you a little happier too
more on monday
love
Paul

HAPPINESS

Things that make me happy include jokes, comedy, T.V, videos and films. Also being with my friends, skiving off lessons, drinking, GIRLS etc! Winding people up, seeing Mr Russ's nose wobble when he is stressed. I also enjoy music (especially drumming!) and shooting and flying.

My friends are usually happy when I'm not winding them up or when they're drunk (out of their skulls, inebriated etc) and when they're having a laugh about funny things that have happened in the past.

Most people are happy when they're doing any of the above things or if they're being congratulated on a good job etc.

Mr Mundt is usually happy when winding up pupils, but unhappy when being wound up by his pupils! He is pleased when pupils produce good work but probably only because it reflects well on him! As for what makes Mr Chapman happy (apart from money) it's anybody's guess!

Biggles"

Mr Mundt's students—big and small—had really written a collection of excellent mottos, ideas, jokes, maxims of happiness. It is easy to see that school and teachers are also part of the students' definitions. Biggles, for instance, cleverly combines his teacher, Mr Mundt, in his definition.

Teacher C1 also had a few contributions written by his students, even if he was a bit hesitant about it first:

"To: TELLASEPPO (TBX850)
 From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Thu 19-Apr-90 20:52 Sys 12762 (1)
 Subject: Reply to: Reply to: Letters to Gorbachev (...)

We will go the computer class tomorrow. Some pupils have some letters in store so they can finish them. I will tell them about Global Village and show them the idea of the theme 'happiness' (I have paper copies of that letter) I just wonder what they think of it. They could also write to the Global Village about another theme too (dealing with course 6, perhaps). Later we could try to contact Campus (I still haven't had an opportunity to study that on my own). (...) [Teacher C1]"

These contributions were sent along with the final letter of Teacher C1 to Mr Brown:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
 From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 21-May-90 12:21 Sys 12762 (78)
 Subject: From Finland to Mr Brown (...)

I will enclose here some thoughts about HAPPINESS by three Finnish pupils from class 2C:

JOY AND HAPPINESS

by R(...) & S(...), 17, Finland

What gives you a happy feeling?

R(...): I am happy when I succeed in something, when I am satisfied with something or I am just on the good mood.

S(...): Little things make me happy: the smell of fresh air after the rain, a beautiful scenery or perhaps a chat with my friend.

How do you feel when you are happy?

R(...): I feel like flying.

S(...): I want to embrace the whole universe.

With whom do you like to share your happiness?

R(...): With people who are close to me, who I like.

S(...): With my friends usually, but sometimes I keep it just to myself.

HAPPINESS

It's a bit difficult to say what happiness is. It means different things for different people depending on things that give them a good feeling.

For me one of those things is sleeping. I wake up in Saturday morning at 6 o'clock and I know I don't have to go to school. I can stay in bed without hurrying and half asleep, half awake just enjoy the warmth and peace. Then I can let my thoughts move free.

On the other hand, I don't like to sleep late in the summer. When I am at the summer cottage, I love to get up early and go for a walk. It's wonderful. The sun has just risen, it's comfortably cool, a few birds are singing. Neighbours haven't woken up yet. There are no cars on the road, no machines in the fields. It's peaceful.

It's not always so easy to be in peace with my own thoughts. I feel happy when I can be like that.

J(...),18, Finland"

Usually the students' contributions form part of the letter the teacher sends with his own greetings. In this case the students' contributions to the theme of happiness end up quite beautifully as the above letter of Teacher C1 equally concerned the whole year's project between Finland and Britain. As this theme proved most fruitful, it was finally taken up to be added to the Campus 2000 noticeboard as well. The above contributions of Teacher C1's students also appeared on this noticeboard.

A fruitful subject as it was, Bill from Canada switched everybody back to "real life" with his short message:

"From: LEN.SHEPHERD. (LSP001) Delivered: Thu 17-May-90 8:23 Sys 2020

To: Teacher C1

Subject: Reply to: Happiness

I have tried to find time in my classes to get some material from the students on joy and happiness. I will try to find some time this week, but it is getting close to exam review time.

Bill :-)"

7.1.19. Food, Recipes, and Diets

One of the most popular themes consisted of food, recipes, and diets, together with healthy (or unhealthy) eating habits. Recipes were exchanged and even tried out in the school kitchens. Undoubtedly, this was a theme, not too widely covered by the national FL curriculum, which seemed to interest many (but not all) students from different countries.

The first letters from Teacher A's British partner school were full of English recipes (*Appendix L*). The food theme was launched by Ludvigsborgs Skola in Sweden, in the same way as they had started another popular theme, "Happiness". The Finnish schools got to know this theme only in the spring of 1990 when a summary was presented and transmitted through the Global Village network. This is the summary that presented the theme and which also outlined some of the contributions received:

"To: Global Village schools

From: LUDVIGSBORGS.SKOLA (YNF024) Delivered: Sun 4-Mar-90 22:53 Sys 10001 (610)

Subject: FOOD—This is what we think!

FOOD—we DO care !

We need it every day !

We can't live without it !

We want to enjoy it !

We know it has to be of proper nutritional value !

Most people seem to be both aware and afraid of all the dangerous things that happen to our food but few are capable of doing enough to stop the pesticide-syringing, the dumping, the effluent and other dangerous acts man expose nature to and we are all afraid of the effects. But what to do ?

Well ! Some people do something about it ! Ross tells us about an extensive re-forestation program in British Columbia, and as you all know trees produce oxygen that is vital to everyone. Another example is the world-wide movement that tries to preserve the Brazilian rain forest by buying square-mile after square-mile to save it from cutting. Most countries have paper recycling programs as well as collecting depots for glass bottles and tin cans. This is all very well but a lot more could be done. All the litter we leave to garbage dumps sooner or later have an effect on the soil (in which we grow crops and vegetables) and the subsoil water (we all need to survive).

And what about all those pesticides used only to make fruit look better ? A lot of people find it better to eat an apple with a little scab on it but is free from biocides, than a nice, shiny one you know has been sprayed.

There seems to be a growing attention to what we eat and how we grow it, and a lot of people who have the possibility of growing their own vegetables and fruits do so, in order to have them free from unknown substances. In England more than 50% of the children can enjoy fruit or vegetables grown in their own gardens, but naturally it's a bit more difficult in New York. One could hope that people growing their own foodstuff would do so without the help of chemicals, but only about 50% do.

All those substances can cause allergy against some kind of food. About 15 to 20 per cent of today's children suffer from some kind of food allergy and they do care. But what about the rest ? Do they know that they can turn allergic at any time in their lives ? Then they have to be very careful with what they eat and can't do, like the ÖésK:he+gglisch children thatPfay they eat foods they KNOW are bad to their health in some way. New York kids seem to be a little more sensible: 'only' 45% eat food they know are 'bad' in some way.

Of course, food-habits differ from one country to another, but on the whole they appear to be quite similar. Most children eat three meals a day. Breakfast is important. A nourishing and well balanced breakfast makes it easier to concentrate and do your job well. Dinner and supper consisting of rice, potatoes or pasta together with meat is the most common dish. Fish is not as popular as meat. The use of fast food spreads more and more, and some people have it more than three

times a week. Is it the demands of modern society and the labour-market that cut down the time, or the will to sit down, relax and enjoy a meal in peace and quiet?

Unfortunately, there are lots of stuff in our food that can cause problems. Allergy, eczema, diarrhoea, asthma and other kinds of pain are not at all unusual symptoms of allergy to food. (And the spreading seems to increase.) To some people, even very small quantities of specific food can be lethal. Nuts and shellfish are only two examples of food that have killed people.

Together with all other kinds of merchandise, prices on food increase, but a general opinion is that the VAT on food should be removed. Maybe this is an idea: Take away the VAT on all kinds of healthy food of proper nutritional value and treble it on junk-food!

Roger Sevedstam YNF024

(...)

To: YNF024 (10001:YNF024)

To: S.GERSH (NYE001)

To: PS26 (NYE013)

From: PS26 (NYE013) Delivered: Thu 14-Dec-89 14:03 GMT Sys 134 (79)

Subject: Food

Roger,

Here are some of my students' feelings about the dangers of the foods that they eat. Unfortunately, most of them preferred to write about what they do not like to eat, rather than the dangers (real or otherwise). We are currently working on the survey that Tony sent, and I will forward the results to you as soon as I have them. Please send us a copy of all of the answers that you get. We would like to see what other people feel about these questions. Have you been working on letters to Gorbachev? I would really like to send a Global Village compilation to him.

We have a few letters ready, and will send them to whomever will be doing the gathering. Regards, Terry

Yes, we have to worry because some of it can kill you and hurt you. We should know what is in the foods we eat and drink. If someone is telling me what is in my food I am going to listen to them and try to stop eating so much of the foods. They can kill you or give you heart attack and high blood pressure. You can't eat fish because fish eat all of the stuff they put in the sea. What people put in the sea the fish eat. Some of the things people put in the water can kill you.

By Deleese C. 4-205

¹ The message contained a lot of garbage, perhaps due to faulty telephone lines.

You have to worry about food you eat because it might be dangerous. On the news they said that apples and other foods have poison in them. It is important to listen to what the people say on the news.

By Lakasha Staton 4-5

We have to watch out what we eat because people like to litter in our waters. We have to try to clean the water because it is becoming a plague upon the land. We should let helicopters bring big nets so that they could clean out the water and take out all of the dirty things. When they are ready to clean out the water they should let all the fish out first.

By Ashraf 4-205 (...)

RESULTS OF SURVEY FROM DAWLISH

1. 30 children have food allergies
2. 45 eat food they know is bad for them
3. 25 eat healthy foods
4. 10 grow their own foods - some with and some without pesticides
5. Aware of oil spill in Alaska; mold on oranges; eggs tainted, fish damaged, grapes with sprays on them

We look forward to hearing what others had to say. Have a happy (and healthy) holiday and new year. Terry Rosengart"

As mentioned earlier, not everybody wanted to discuss this theme. Teacher C1's students, for example, were rather reluctant to start with this topic:

"Then different themes were brought up: the teacher mentioned that the Swedish school had transmitted letters about food, a theme which had been discussed in the Global Village earlier. It seemed that this topic did not interest the students any more. (They had not yet scanned or browsed the Swedish letters.) (...)" (A fieldnote in School C, Teacher C1, on March 5th, 1990)

There was also some criticism about the food topic in the Global Village e-mails; the Swedish approach was, oddly enough, found to be too academic in some ways. Perhaps it was also too common or familiar, so that not all classes were keen on resuming discussion after having read some of the incoming messages.

7.1.20. Money and Prices

Economic factors, such as students' pocket money and prices of different goods, were somewhat discussed, though not very enthusiastically. The first of the following letters, written by two girls in School C, is fairly informative regarding the situation in Finland.

Furthermore, it keeps the communication channel open by asking a number of questions the recipients could answer. This can be seen as a positive sign of affirmative interest in the affairs of the partner school country. The second letter, on the other hand, concentrates on the Finnish side only.

To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 13:16 Sys 12762 (1)

Subject: From Finland to Mr Brown (...)

Youth and money

Here in Finland we have a high price level. Clothes are about twice more expensive here than in Britain. For example, Levi's jeans cost about 60 pounds, records about 10 and so on.

Part of high school students work in a part-time job in the evenings and/or weekends. They usually work as a shop-assistant or in McDonalds or in a place like it. Cleaning in offices is common too. Usually a pay per an hour is 25—30 marks that's about 4 pounds.

Is working in freetime very usual there? Do you pay your own expenses or do your parents pay them?

How about taxes? Student can earn here 8200 marks (that's about 1170 pounds) without taxes yearly, then she/he has to pay 23% from the wages. We think that the tax limit could be higher... Most of money is spent on clothes, movies, eating and so on.

Those usual things.

M(...) and S(...)"

To: YOJ002

From: Teacher B Delivered: Mon 12-Mar-90 16:26 Sys 10001)

Subject: Contributions (...)

2. THE PRICES OF GOODS

Finland is one of the most expensive countries in the world. Food prices have risen enormously during the last few years, just like the prices of alcohol and cigarettes. Of course tax free shops sell different articles for tourists at 'normal' prices. Living in Finland is extremely costly because of very high taxes. (...)"

Crossculturally, Finnish students tended to remark how expensive it was to live in this country, but they already had realised that direct comparing of prices was not enough; one had to take various other factors into account, such as the level of salaries, indirect taxation, etc. To some extent this theme was associated with the contents of Course 8, only to be studied in Form 3. However, even in the Finnish comprehensive school, some aspects of this theme are usually talked about, pocket money in particular.

Wages were rather dramatically paid attention to in the German newsletter:

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015
To: School C
Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

THAT'S WHY by Jeannette Händel

I came from East-to West-Germany two months before the opening of the Berlin Wall and the frontier barrier between both German states. Innumerable problems chased people away from the GDR. (...) people mostly worked hard, but got very little wages. And if they only wanted to buy a jeans-jacked, they had to pay 600, - (East German) Marks and more. This is nearly as much money you get a wages per month. (...)

But with the opening of the Berlin Wall and we can visit our friends and relatives. But most people of the GDR have not enough money to go on holiday to West-Germany, Italy or France for instance. (...)"

Fashion, on the other hand, was one of the least discussed subjects, much to my surprise. It was true that some letters were exchanged, dealing with the prices of clothes, but then the viewpoint was somewhat different.

"From: COOMBE.GIRLS.ISM (YOJ007) Delivered: Wed 7-Mar-90 14:59 GMT Sys 11
To: Teacher B
Subject: Environment Day (...)

Hi, my name is Clare White and I am 11 years old. I am writing to ask about the fashion in your country. Here in England it's desert boots, baggy trousers and hooded patterned tops. Desert boots are big bulky suede boots.

Do the boys and girls wear the same in your country? They wear the same here apm the boys do not wear skirts. Please write back and tell me about the fashion in your country."

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)
Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

What sort of fashion sense have you got there, we're into loose baggy clothes and nice clumpy shoes and boots. None of the usual feminine stuff, thats too square. The boys here wear loud shirts with jeans and clumpy boots, the main fashion freaks wear hooded tops with loud patterns on. By 'loud' I mean outgoing.

Have you ever been to England or any where else in the world ? Well I suppose I'd better go now Hope to hear from you soon. KAREN (...)"

I assume this could have become a more popular theme, especially between Mr Brown's professionally and vocationally oriented students, if the logistic problems with timetables, school moves, and the end of the term had not jeopardised the promising start. A few hints to this theme could be seen in some students' profiles, but as stated above, not much was written about fashions and clothes at all.

7.1.21. Migration and Refugees

Regarding migration and refugees, the position of Finland has sometimes been characterised as solitary, isolated, and forbidding. It was interesting to notice that this theme was rather widely discussed through e-mail contacts. As there were several descriptions or mentions of this theme both in Finnish students' e-mails and in US letters in particular, the theme became one of the most serious issues concerning interindividual relationships.

Dealing with this theme started in School B from a suggestion made by three girls, who expressed their wish to write something about refugees and language learning problems. I observed their working for several weeks. They went on to describe the refugees' living conditions in their own town, where some 60 refugees already lived, so the theme was topical and also of local importance. None of the refugees, however, attended their school yet. While writing their contribution, the girls asked me about specific lexis they were looking for, such as the English-language equivalent for *asuntopula* (shortage of housing), etc.

A number of student profiles, especially those arrived from New York schools, included aspects of migration or problems of being a refugee (see also Tella 1991, 109—110). The following example, in which a girl, now living in Canada, nostalgically writes about her reminiscences of her home town Hanoi, seemed to touch some of the Finnish students too.

#7 10-DEC-1989 14:14:55 NEWMAIL
From: IN%"USERNBSP@SFU.BITNET" "Trevor Owen"
To: TELLA@cc.Helsinki.FI (...)

MY CITY

The city which I remember vaguely is Hanoi, yet it remains my most sentimental city because it was the first place I became familiar with as I took my little part in the world. Hanoi was one of the main cities in North Vietnam which consisted of an oversized population in respect

to its area. Out of all the cities, Hanoi could be considered as the most wealthy; however, only to a certain extent. If it was compared with Toronto, it would be far worse in terms of economics.

I do not have a clear image of Hanoi because I was only five years of age when my family, among many other Chinese families, were forced to depart Vietnam. The Communist government strictly declared that all Chinese were unwanted in their country. Even though I was very young then, I could still describe a clear picture of my homeland.

In a sense, Hanoi was a very active city filled with ever lasting hard-working people. Almost everyone owned some sort of small business, such as bakeries, barbershops and fruit markets. Naturally as the warm sunlight leisurely crept into the city, all alarm clocks cried with rhythmically indicating the start of another busy day. Each person then set off to do their own things, there was no such thing as slacking off because time and money were the most important aspects. As usual, the owner of each business would set their products out on the sidewalk. Mainly fresh fruits and vegetables were sold outside in the open. By nine o'clock, the market was filled with excitement. The smell of homemade cookies and coffee dominated the entire atmosphere forcing each tastebud to dance. Then again, there were the harsh noises which penetrated your eardrum, even if you didn't want to hear them. Just by the beeping of the bicycle horn, the crushing of canned foods, the grinding of pig bones and the screeching of wooden slippers gliding against the cement, could make you deaf.

The speed of time started to drag as the day came to a close. Every movement created an image of laziness due to the humid climate. Though it was very hot, people struggled to do their jobs. The scene appeared extremely peaceful with tall trees and exotic flowers moving in a melodic rhythm. Soft music was heard from electronic stores and sweet voices of lovebirds filled the air with tranquil lullabies. Then again, as the rush hour commenced, the main streets were filled with numerous bicycles, one of the most common forms of transportation. The amazing thing was that there weren't any traffic lights and yet people managed to bike through intersections without colliding into each other!!

Imagine if these bicycles were replaced by cars? After a long day of labour everyone was looking forward to a delicious meal prepared by the housewives. After eating, everyone would retire into the living room for a nice cup of tea. As the city said goodbye to the sunlight, the people were ready to collapse into their comforting beds and to restore energy for another day yet to come.

Since I was only a young child then, I was not allowed out during the evening therefore I cannot give you a description of the night scene. However, from the interview with my mom I can say that the city retained its loveliness, but with great tranquillity. I really treasure every memory I have of Hanoi because it is a place I'll always reflect upon wherever I go, and after all, it is my native land.

WRITTEN BY: Jenny Ong 13F"

In many respects, the letter above offers crosscultural aspects or even *Weltkunde* to be studied and to be thought highly of. The contrast between the bicycle-based Hanoi so majestically depicted in Jenny's letter and the busy life of her present-day home, technologically dominated Toronto, is immense, giving extra depth to this description.

Germany also represents a multicultural society. This was evidenced, among other things, in the German newsletter:

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015
To: School C
Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

A MULTINATIONAL SCHOOL

In our school 32 nationalities from all over the world were represented in 1988:

main groups

TURKS	105	POLES	15
AFGHANIS	60	ITALIANS	13
IRANIS	50	JUGOSLAVES	10
LATIN-AMERICANS	10	SPANIARDS	39
AFRICANS	8	ASIANS	8

The share of foreign pupils amounts to 25%. Accordingly there are conflicts between those minorities. Normally Moslems have different outlooks on life. Especially Iranis and Afghanis have disputes about religious convictions. The European attitude towards women seems to be incompatible with the islamic views. But the relation between German and foreign pupils is usually good.

HOW TO COPE WITH INTEGRATION PROBLEMS ?

There are certain patterns of integration programs:

1. 'NEIGUNGSKURSE': classes in which specified talents can be advanced.
2. SOCIAL WORKERS
3. YOUTH CLUBS
4. GERMANS MEET FOREIGNERS groups

Angelo Caradonna, 18, Frank Raupert, 19 (...)"

7.1.22. War and Weapons

Not every theme dealt with affirmative, positive things. Also negative and controversial subjects were talked about and pessimistic views expressed. Wars, weapons, bombs, and diseases, among

other things, were treated. The political situation in the Baltic States also made some students express aggressive views in their Letters to Mr Gorbachev (these will be discussed in Chapter 7.2.1; see also Tella 1991, 187—189).

One of Teacher A's boys wrote about the notorious "Peacemaker".

To: YSO001 (10001:YSO001)
 From: Teacher A Delivered: Fri 27-Apr-90 11:48 Sys 12762 (96)
 Subject: message (...)

During our culture course one of my students wrote this article as his homework. I thought it would be nice to receive similar writings from your students, which we could analyse during the lessons here.
 Best Wishes, [Teacher A] (...)

J(...) H(...) 5th April, 1990

Man—the Maker and Breaker

In the middle of the 19th century Samuel Colt invented a revolutionary weapon. It is ironical that this weapon, six-shooter, was named 'Peacemaker', the weapon which ends all the wars due to its unthinkable firepower and unintelligible firing speed. Well, we all know what happened...

Wars and the progress of man are intimately related. From the dawn of history man has made some of his greatest inventions, innovations and breakthroughs in technology during wars. During the Second World War this was true. Many great constructions were made and a lot of ideas were completed. For example, the aircraft established its position as the world's best vehicle in the long distances and became one of the most effective war machines ever seen. In addition to radars, communication systems and computers developed more during the five years of war than during twenty years of peace.

Nuclear power also developed during the WW II. First it was only a bomb—the most destructive weapon. Only ONE bomb ruined the city of Hiroshima in 1945. What a massacre ! And nowadays nuclear bombs are thousands of times more effective. On the other hand, nuclear power is our best source of energy. It is an enemy and a friend of mankind. If we use nuclear power wisely, it is a good tool, but we can commit suicide, even genocide, with nuclear power if we don't deal with it carefully."

One of the girls in Teacher C1's class wrote a long review of a new Finnish film "Winter War", which described the Finnish Winter War (see Tella 1991, 195). This article was reprinted for the Finnish newsletter in March 1990. I suggested to Teacher C1 that he write an introduction to the Winter War, which he did (*Appendix M*). No feedback ever came with regard to these contributions. However,

from the viewpoint of the teaching/learning process, a lot was already done when these letters were planned, outlined, written, and sent. Although any feedback, including any counterarguments, would have been most welcome, the effort itself was worth doing. Besides, it even made Teacher C1 to look into a problem arising from his student's contribution. In this sense, the student's review was a powerful stimulus, which activated his teacher, and which positively contributed to the Finnish newsletter as well.

7.1.23. Diseases

One of Teacher B's groups of boys initiated a discussion about diseases. They were motivated by the chapter in their textbook but went a long way away from it, as they also included some real measurements in their contribution.

To: YOJ002

From: Teacher B Delivered: Mon 5-Feb-90 14:39 Sys 10001)

Subject: Cardiovascular

Dear Lawrence,

Some of the boys asked me to send this to you. As you certainly possibly contributing to an early invalidization or something more final. If I am not completely mistaken this disease is not unknown in Britain either. The text is mainly based on the ideas presented in our textbook. If you know of any recent findings in this area we would be most interested to read about them. Also, any other comments are welcome.

With best wishes, [Teacher B]"

To: YOJ002

From: Teacher B Delivered: Mon 5-Feb-90 16:04 Sys 10001)

Subject: Cardiotext

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES IN FINLAND

Cardiovascular diseases are the leading national health problem in Finland. The coronary problem is associated with industrialization, because we live under the pressure of stress and work. After the work-day people should take physical exercise and relax, but most of them just sit in their homes and eat too fat food as high-fat milk and butter on their bread. Because the overweight population have the low physical activity, it will lead to the cardiovascular diseases.

Social and Health care authorities have organized effective and impressive activities to aim at preventing this national disease. Because the problem is essentially one of people's bad habits and the task is that of changing it, a high degree of community involvement is essential. That's why Health authorities have brought the severity and

extent of the health problem to the knowledge of the whole nation. Information is given through the radio, newspapers and leaflets and never before have diseases been discussed so much in public in Finland as during the information and publicity campaigns in 1988 and 1989. There is a fundamental attempt to maintain the population at normal weight as well as to reduce the use of salt and thus, by safe means, to diminish the risk of hypertension. A decrease in smoking, the change of diet to lower the high cholesterol level, and the reduction of high blood pressure are also among the most important tasks. We would like to know what the cardiovascular disease situation is in England and what you have done to solve this problem.

P(...) S(...), P(...) L(...), K(...) H(...), S(...) L(...), M(...) P(...), K(...) S(...)"

The boys also had a follow-up task: to compile students' records of cholesterol, make a chart of it and send it to Britain. I asked them to comment on the limits of the scale and ask if the same figures would be valid in British hospitals. The school nurse took care of the measurements.

"To: YOJ002

From: Teacher B Delivered: Mon 12-Mar-90 16:26 Sys 10001)

Subject: Contributions (...)

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES IN FINLAND 1985-86

Causes of death:

1. Hypertensive diseases:	men + women = 436	men 137 women 299
2. Ischaemic heart diseases:	men + women = 14040	men 7708 women 6332
3. Other forms of heart diseases:	men + women = 2453	men 962 women 1491

A cholesterol test was arranged in our school at the end of January by our school nurse. Good cholesterol level varies from 2.5 - to 5. If the cholesterol level is more than 5 units the risk of developing cardiovascular diseases have risen alarmingly.

If your cholesterol level is more than 6.8 units you will probably fall ill and you may need some further investigations.

Here are some cholesterol levels of our group:

P(...) 2.98 K(...) 4.67 K(...) 3.87 S(...) 5.18

J(...) M(...), S(...) E(...), J(...) V(...), I(...) L(...) (...)"

Illnesses also appeared at the practical level. Participating teachers fell ill, had colds and thus days off school. Teacher C2's partner teacher, Mr Milford, included in one of his last letters an explanatory note on his physical condition:

"From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Sun 3-June-90 21:40 Sys 10001

To: Teacher C2 (...)

I really am sorry that communications have been rather rare recently. I had to have some time away from work in May due to 'flu and a secondary chest infection. My local doctor prescribed some antibiotics and I then had a violent reaction to the drugs—something I had never experienced before. Ah well, better now. (...)"

7.1.24. Animal Testing

Opinions and views against animals being tested for medical purposes were expressed occasionally.

"From: COOMBE.GIRLS.ISM (YOJ007) Delivered: Wed 7-Mar-90 14:59 GMT Sys 11

To: Teacher B

Subject: Environment Day (...)

Our school feels very strongly about cruelty to animals. Animals are hunted by the Millions each year, Foxes are very rare in England because of farmers try to kill them because the foxes try to kill and eat Chickens. There are also a fox season where hunters with their dogs try to catch or kill them for cash prizes. Also the thing we really hate is the makeup testing on all kinds of animals. Sometimes some people buy others dogs for their birthday or for christmas when them people cant look after them so they throw them out (...)"

The Campus 2000 noticeboard had several comments on animal testing, but these were read *en passant*, without arousing any particular attention among the Finnish students.

"To: TELLA.SEPPÖ (TBX850)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 21-May-90 12:30 Sys 12762 (429)
(...)

3:5) end

17-MAY-90 16:04

We are against animal testing because we don't agree with animal suffering and dying because somebody wants to look good with make-up. We think that people could do with no make-up or buy stuff which is tested on human volunteers and is n't tested on animals. What do you think?

Vicki Langton and Clare Gauld (12)

3:6) end

17-MAY-90 16:07

I worry about the channel tunnel; think about all the animals with rabies that could come into our country.

Emily Bateson and Julie Berridge.

3:7) end

17-MAY-90 16:12

The Japanese go fishing in the Pacific for salmon and they use drift nets. All the dolphins get caught up in the net and they leave them to get dry and they get pulled through a winch and it crushes them to death. Hundreds get killed a week. I think it is very cruel and that someone should ban it completely

Natalie Bryant and Kelly Knight (14)

I think whaling should be banned because most whales are caught for fun and there are a few hundred humped backed whales left in the world as well as a few blue whales. About 10% of whales caught are used for scientific purposes.

Neil Bunday and Robert Arnell and Rimal Ahmed. (...)"

7.1.25. The Matriculation Examination

As the students participating in the fieldwork period in Finland represented Forms 1 and 2 but not Form 3, the theme of the Finnish (or corresponding foreign) matriculation examination did not turn up distinctly. As shown in the notice below, a special conference was established on Campus 2000, on which issues of evaluation and assessment could be discussed. This example set by the University of Cambridge could also serve a model for the Finnish Matriculation Examination Board, which could probably make use of the e-mail network by transmitting tests and by gathering data and opinions through the same channels.

"To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2

From: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850) Delivered: Sat 14-Apr-90 14:55 Sys 12762 () (...)

ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

3 Discussion responses

20:1) david paul

8/18/89 9:53

This conference item has been established by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate as a demonstration of electronic conferencing to its EFL (English as a Foreign Language) centres. Your responses to this item are welcome. EFL enquiries should be addressed to our TTNS¹ mailboxes. (...)"

A more serious tone was added to this conversation by a German student:

¹ TTNS is the previous name of Campus 2000.

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015
To: School C
Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

THAT'S WHY by Jeannette Händel

I came from East-to West-Germany two months before the opening of the Berlin Wall and the frontier barrier between both German states. Innumerable problems chased people away from the GDR. One of the greatest problem was, that nobody was allowed to have his personal opinion and nobody was allowed to publish his own thought about thing which happened in this country. If you wanted to get to the top, you had to do, to say and to think as the party gave you the order.

(...) I came to West-Germany because I was not allowed to take the school-leaving-examination in the G. D. R. and did not get an apprenticeship there. The teacher said to me roughly this:

"If you do not think like our party
and you do not do something for it,
you do not have the right to take your
school - leaving - examination !

So I went away from there and had to leave my friends, relatives and home-town. (...)"

7.1.26. The Global Village

The contribution some of the boys in School B wrote about heart diseases was later published in the Kingston E-mail Magazine and added to the Global Village Newsletter. Teacher B utilised this opportunity to tell his students in more detail about the origin of the term "Global Village" (e.g., McLuhan & Powers 1989; Toffler 1981; Toffler 1990), and an "Electronic Cottage", referring to the world where people can communicate via electronic mail and teleconferencing despite geographical distances. The theme of the Global Village turned up from time to time, for instance on Campus 2000, on which there was a summary of a discussion which had been going on for a long period of time already:

"To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2
From: TELLA.SEPPPO (TBX850) Delivered: Sat 14-Apr-90 15:03 Sys 12762 ()
Subject: CURRICUL (...)

Item 1 1/16/88 1:18 Tony Scott
SHARING IN THE GLOBAL CLASSROOM

One of the major aspects of the use of electronic mail is the ability to link schools in different parts of the globe: how should such links be organised and used? do they have to have a 'purpose'? do they promote understanding or reinforce misunderstanding? how can teachers capitalise on cross-curriculum aspect of links?

4 Discussion responses

1:1) Helen Milner 10/02/88 5:08

I think that International Linking between schools around the globe is a fascinating way for students to understand different cultures but we should not limit the educational value to merely 'understanding' cultures and I suppose that is where the cross curriculum aspects come to mind. Developing of language skills is a very obvious benefit to school linking.

Once an element of information exchange on one topic eg Geography or many topics such as slang and food etc—is introduced then other curriculum areas are being used other than computing and english. And then if contribution to databases or conferencing is introduced the students are learning a variety of Information Technology skills and learning the most important of those skills that the Information is more important than the Technology.

I have many other things to add but will leave that for an item of my own. I suggest people look at the student generated work on the Australian Database as part of the Bicentennial Australian Database Project. Other Student generated work can be seen on the International Database. Other comments can be directed to me on TCD004. (...)"

7.1.27. Teacher Education Systems

The fieldwork period could have given an opportunity for the teachers to compare the teacher education systems in all the participating countries. This was not systematically done, but several teachers, however, dealt with this topic, albeit somewhat cursorily. The main result was that two of the Finnish teachers, Teachers C1 and C2, assisted by me, wrote a detailed description of the Finnish initial (or pre-service) teacher education system, which was sent to several countries, and which finally appeared, in a slightly modified form, in Anon. (1991). (The version we agreed upon during the fieldwork period, cf. *Appendix N*).

The compilation of this article exemplified well how a text worked on by three persons located in three different physical sites could be elaborated and finalised via e-mail so that the existing text always served as a model for further modifications. A word-processor as a tool and e-mail as a telemedium flexibly merged to give us a handy means of preparing a common article. The whole pro-

cess did not take long, as most of the modifications were done practically overnight, which could not have been achieved by ordinary letters or by telephoning. Facsimile would not have helped us either, as then one of us—or probably each of us—would have been compelled to write some part of the text again, instead of just editing and revising the text accessible to him via e-mail. There is no doubting certain advantages of fax machines, but as Negroponte (1991, 83) strongly puts it, "the presence of fax machines (...) are setting back by decades the cause of making information more readable to computers". The same kind of argument against fax machines is also expressed elsewhere (cf. e.g., Thompson 1991, 159). In the present case, e-mail was a much more flexible medium to work with.

7.1.28. Curricula and FL Learning

Another topic discussed between the participating teachers consisted of curricular issues in connection with foreign language learning. All Finnish teachers and myself explained some features of the Finnish FL curriculum to the respective foreign participants.

Earlier, I pondered upon the influence Europeanisation or internationalisation could have on themes and topics students and teachers were likely to write about. Even if some of the themes originated from the FL curriculum, other topics were in the air, due to international developments of certain areas of interest. This kind of discussion was going on on Campus 2000, concerning the European dimension in the English curriculum. Much of this discussion interested the Finnish participants as well.

To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2

From: TELLA.SEPPÖ (TBX850) Delivered: Sat 14-Apr-90 15:01 Sys 12762 ()

Subject: EUROPE (...)

Item 6 2/05/88 10:30 Bob Blackledge

Introducing The European Dimension Into The Curriculum

The argument over centralised or non-centralised curriculum ought not to be allowed to impede the insertion of the European dimension into the various stages and types of colleges/schools. The skilled teacher will always be able to extend his work to include the European aspects. What is needed is a policy decision for a region and a programme which will encourage educational development in the European dimension suitable to the aged aptitudes and abilities of the pupils. But this has to be supported by continuing in-service training

and some resources. A suggested scheme might include some of the following: (...)

4.2 Lower Secondary 11—14. Here, because of the absence of immediate examination pressures, it is possible to include, in social events, aesthetic subjects. Science and technology should be included too. All this work should involve using modern technology, etc., and some use of language skills by all students.

4.3 Upper Secondary 14+. Here the emphasis could well turn to the encouragement of adult discussion on European and world issues which may be controversial, e.g. pollution, peace, nuclear energy, human rights, health, etc. This may be included in the general areas, but other opportunities can be afforded for authentic work in all examination subjects and it is hoped that eventually examination systems will take notice of such studies in assessment and evaluation. (...)"

In fact, many of the aspects included in the above already exist in the Finnish FL curriculum. The e-mail project, on the other hand, further activated some of the Europe-gearred topics, but as some of the participants in the fieldwork period were overseas, the issues discussed had an even more global audience.

Teacher B also wrote to his partner teacher Mr Lawrence about the curriculum and about how he saw the Finnish language was to be located in the FL forum:

"To: -YOJ002

From: Teacher B Delivered: Fri 5-Jan-90 13:38 Sys 10001)

Subject: 2nd contact (...)

As background information you might want to know something about the kind of English studies we pursue here in Finnish senior secondary schools. English is, it is true, certainly the most popular of the languages taught at school. Nevertheless, it is equally true and worth remembering that it is after all a foreign language to us Finns—Finnish belongs as you know to the Finno-Ugric, non-Indo-European group of languages. Second, due to this rather unfortunate linguistic isolation we have to study a number of languages in addition to English to be able to communicate with the rest of Europe. A third factor, which inevitably sets limits to what can be done and what cannot is the final school leaving examination in the third year. The exam tests students not only on their ability to communicate in writing, which I hope this electronic link will improve, but also on their reading and listening comprehension and grammar. Thus, because of its foreign language character, the English we study here is certainly rather different from what is understood by English in British schools. The students have so far studied English seven years in the comprehensive school and a year and a half in the senior secondary school.

In practice, this means three 45-minute lessons per week at the moment. During these three lessons per week throughout the school year we should be able to study three courses of English, each one comprising 38 hours. English course number 5, which is being studied right now, deals with technology and science, including such things as primitive technologies, mass media, home computers, etc.

I hope the above will provide you with at least a rough framework within which our studies take place. As far as your suggestion concerning English literature is concerned, I am afraid it may be, knowing my students' average command of English at this stage, requiring rather too much of them. At least to begin with, we may have to be satisfied with something rather more down-to-earth. There are, however, some rather advanced students in this group, who, I hope, will be able to communicate on a level more appropriate to your students.

Yours sincerely, [Teacher B]"

On the whole, Teacher B appeared keen on discussing issues connected to FL learning and the use of computers. The next letter from him to Mr Lawrence also revealed his deep worry about how everything should be done properly.

To: YOJ002 (10001:YOJ002)

From: Teacher B Delivered: Tue 6-Mar-90 9:52 Sys 12762 (42)

Subject: Learning (...)

There certainly is more poetry coming as soon as my students get to their computers again after the winter holiday. Concerning the contributions you've already got, I'm sorry about the language which isn't really up to any standard. The fact is I did review the language to make it somehow acceptable, but one way or another while I was collecting all the bits and pieces to one diskette just this particular version got lost, and I didn't have the energy to do it again.

Anyway, this may serve as some sort of clumsy transition to what has interested me as a foreign language teacher and also very much so as an individual: what is the role of computers in language learning, and secondly how do we best learn and, consequently, teach languages? I think these are relevant questions also in our e-mail context.

I would be only too glad to get your opinions on these and related questions, since I am quite sure you as an expert in this field must have considered these matters more than once. As you may remember from our earlier correspondence, there is the final school leaving examination (a national one) in this country, which is really a mixed blessing. On the one hand it undoubtedly makes us use our precious time most efficiently, but on the other hand it may lead us somehow astray in creating the possibly false belief that the methods used in preparation for the exam should also be the best for language learning in general. What I find personally is that we most probably use apply rather too academic methods and draw too heavily on the students'

intellectual qualities instead of relying more on their natural language learning abilities, whatever they may be. Please note that I am definitely not opposed to hard work, far from it, but what I am most concerned about is whether our energy is spent on the right things. So, this is just a general and personal outline of the state of the art at the moment. I would be most grateful if you could find a spare moment to discuss this matter from the standpoint of an English IT teacher. (...)"

Mr Lawrence also sent a number of letters, discussing the possibilities e-mail offers to language teaching (cf. Tella 1991, 197). Teacher B considered all these viewpoints and finally replied to this effect:

"To: YOJ002
From: Teacher B Delivered: Sun 8-Apr-90 12:03 Sys 10001 (42)
Subject: L-improve (...)

First of all, I have to admit that the value I attach to a tool in foreign language teaching is to a very great extent determined by its ability to produce desirable results, i.e. improved command of the target language. By a tool I understand a wide variety of things, such as video (which I unfortunately have quite too little experience of), suggestopedia (another largely unexplored area for me), translation-method, immersion-method, etc. I think it is justified to talk of the use of computers in language learning as a tool in the same sense as to talk of an extensive use of the video in teaching. They are tangible things like pencil and paper, but naturally there is very much more to them than just their being different objects from, let us say the overhead projector. Exactly because of these other qualities inherent in the tools in question, their use means a conscious choice of line in language teaching, that is, determining your priorities. As the use of the computer almost invariably seems to require a considerable amount of time, I would prefer to call it a tool rather in the same sense or at least approaching the same sense as for example some particular language teaching method.

I cannot help repeating myself, when I state that input-output aspect cannot be ignored within a very limited time resource.

I hope to be able to elaborate my ideas further and also get more into actual details in future. Please, don't misunderstand me, this is perhaps just some kind of general impression which may be due to several practical inconveniences hampering my own work, for instance myself having no modem at home, having a wonderful Apple but incompatible, as you know, with the PC-world, generally speaking my own inexperience in the field and the ever-gnawing wish to find the time for my own computer education as well as for my own language improvement. Actually, what it boils down to is what I mentioned in the previous sentence—language improvement.

Best wishes, [Teacher B]"

7.1.29. Extra Themes Initiated Through Campus

The Finnish participating teachers accessed materials from various sources. First, they exchanged ideas with their foreign partner school teacher and his students. Second, they utilised each other's materials, which were forwarded to them by me or by one of the teachers themselves. Third, the Global Village network first brought a lot of material to School C, but gradually all this material was forwarded to Schools A and B as well. These schools also produced letters to be sent to the Global Village. Forth, Campus 2000 provided everybody with an extra resource. In the beginning, only Schools B and C could access its databases, conferences and noticeboards, but a lot of this material was gathered and transmitted to School A as well. Numerous references have already been made to e-mails received through Campus 2000. In this chapter, some extra themes will be indicated with a few extracts to illustrate the topic under discussion.

On April 14th, 1990, I spent several hours on Campus 2000, in order to gather further examples for the use of all the participating teachers. This material was also sent to all participating IT teachers. I underlined the fact that most of the files were meant for the "general cultivation" of the teachers, but that many of the files could and should be used with the students as well.

As examples of themes I looked into could be mentioned INDES3, which dealt with alcohol misuse, to some interest to Teachers B and C1's groups who were just writing about this theme. A database called DUDANT consisted of the diary of the Trans-Antarctic expedition going on during the fieldwork period. It included exciting episodes from the expedition, e.g.,

To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2
From: (TBX850) Delivered: Sat 14-Apr-90 14:45 Sys 12762 ()
Subject: DUDANT (...)

*** Welcome to ***

* The International 1989/90 Trans-Antarctic Expedition Database *

CODE	SERVICE
* 1	General Expedition Information
* 2	Latest News Report
* 3	Last Week's News Report
* 4	Full Expedition Diary
* 5	Antarctica Educational Resources
* 6	Useful Keywords (...)

Day 204 : Wednesday February 14th 1990

No progress. Team taking a day of rest. Temperatures between -44C and -36C.

Day 205 : Thursday February 15th 1990

30 miles progress. Temperatures between -47C and -41C. Winds at 16mph from the southeast. This translates to windchills of -113F and lower. visibility zero. Once again, team notes 'cold' in the satellite message. Finished at 69.760S, 95.374E.

Zero visibility can be extremely dangerous in 'Antarctica, even when the team is camped for the night. Will Steger writes in his journal: Victor was in a tractor train in September of '76 which was halted by a storm like this. The sleeping car was separated from the cook car by 100 metres. One day they went out for lunch and within 5 minutes they got lost. In a dilemma they turned around and wandered for an hour, they froze their faces, their hands and feet. In their desperation they tried to dig under the snow but couldn't. by almost a miracle Victor walked over a wire which he had placed out the day before as part of an experiment. They followed this life line back to safety. Dahe told me another incident where he was stationed for 14 months. A man went out to do a routine weather observation in a storm. The instruments were located between two long buildings laying parallel, 50 yards apart. The man got lost and was found frozen to death 20 yards from the building. (...)"

As a curious coincidence, when I mentioned to some US schools that I regularly browsed the DUDANT diary on Campus 2000, they asked me to forward the diary to them as well, because they had no access to Campus 2000. So, from the South Pole to England, then via e-mail to Finland, to be forwarded to the United States.

Campus 2000 included a lot of miniconferences (CAUCUS), dealing with miscellaneous things, e.g., communication, European issues, future, news about England, discipline in schools. Not all were open to the participating teachers, though. A CAUCUS user could register for the "Stocks and Shares" game or a project called "Hands on History". What I thought would interest the Finnish teachers was the English Department of Education and Science Database, giving access to a number of circular letters intended for the English teaching staff. There were also instructions about special schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Some of the conferences provided the participating teachers with a lot of captivating stuff. FUTURE, for instance, included these kinds of contributions:

"To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2
From: TELLA.SEPP0 (TBX850) Delivered: Sat 14-Apr-90 14:53 Sys
12762 ()
Subject: FUTURE (...)

Welcome to the FUTURE. How do you see your life in 2039 ? There are 12 items at present in this conference with topics such as Conservation, Transport, Music, Fashion, Food, Energy, Space, Architecture, Leisure, Advertising and Education covered. The last item is for you to say whether or not you think life will be better in 2039.

If you have any ideas for new sections, or need any help or advice please email me, Helen Milner, on TCD004.

ENJOY YOUR FUTURE (..)

Item 15 6/21/89 16:51 Belinda Baker

Green Support

Do you think the Greens really know what they are doing—or would they bring about a total economic collapse ? (...)

The Year 2039 from British Columbia, Canada (...)

In the year 2039 our project will be very high in technology. For transportation we will have solar powered cars, planes. Not only will we have fast and more efficient forms of transportation but we will also have modified houses. Inside there will be an escalator type stairway and robots passing us and making our food. Our beds will be naturally heated with automatic heat blankets and covers. Our triple car garage will have automatic door openers and a scanner to check out what type of car it was that entered the garage, if it is not equal to the car that is owned by the owner of the house a silent alarm will sound. This alarm notifies the police and they will arrive at the house in a couple of minutes. Our house's doors will also have detectors. If we are out and noone is home we will have motion detectors that will sound if one object happens to move within the house while this alarm is turned on. For locks on these door we will have special cards you enter and then a key you have to enter. On our car doors there will be buttons with codes on them if you enter the right code it will let you in if you enter the wrong one it gives you 4 more times to get the right password. by Jason Stauffer

Welcome to this introductory look into the the year 2039. This information is for you to understand our time.

In the later 20th century the earth went into a great depression, the earth went violent, earthquakes, storms, and fighting but not to the extent of destruction. The earthquakes stopped along with the storms. The land had changed to form a new world for us, a new unity and a new humanity. We have cleaned up the world and developed new ways of clean transportation and pure energy without radiation. The Moon is inhabited now and we are exploring Jupiter. The newest mes-

sages from one of our deep space probes have found other planets that could have life.

My time has ended, the link is now going to be broken, goodbye and farwell. James river, and most of BC (...)"

Some teachers participated in the same conference with their comments in between:

"(...) 16:2) Stellan Ranebo 1/13/90 13:22

I am very impressed with the enthusisam and intensity in this conference. I wish to thank you all for important thoughts given to me and all others reading your texts. I would very much like to make some comments on the discussed item and hope to be able to do so in CAUCUS 2 in february.

16:3) WALLACE HIGH SCHOOL 1/15/90 15:26

nice to hear from you again Stellan. How is the library project? We seem to have dried up. Anyone in your country interested?

ITEM 16...RESPOND, PASS, or ? for options: (PASS) (...)

Item 17 2/24/90 17:04 Frank Hemming
UTOPIA

In order to predict what the world would be like in 50 years time it might be a good idea to think about how we would like the world to be in the future. Has anybody contributing to this conference read 'News from Nowhere' by William Morris?

2 Discussion responses

17:1) Mervyn Turevy 2/25/90 10:49
give me more reference

17:2) Dawlish School 2/26/90 18:11

i TRIED READING the Daily Telegraph, Frank, but that just seemed to be News from the Government. Perhaps I have the wrong angle? (...)"

Besides conferences, Campus 2000 provided an access to some twenty noticeboards, such as Arts, Careers, Environment, Europe, Humanities, Languages, Satellites, Sport, Technology, and Worldwide. A human interest viewpoint was often quite tangible on these noticeboards:

"To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2

From: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850) Delivered: Mon 16-Apr-90 9:17 Sys 12762 (4)

Subject: Campus/Noticeboard (...)

Subject: family trees

From: YMA013 Posted: Mon 26-Mar-90 13:28 Sys 1 (...)

I am A English doy with an American perant and Norweigen and Polish g
I wold apriciate any help in traceing the Polish side of the family
one of my grandpents introduced red cabidge to poland my mothers
maiden name is (...)"

Schools B and C had an account on Campus 2000, through which they could receive messages concerning different kinds of campaigns and projects. As an example, part of an e-mail received on Campus 2000 on January 3rd, 1990:

"From: LISA.ROSARIO (TCD025) Delivered: Wed 3-Jan-90 17:48 GMT Sys 10001
To: HELSINKIUNIV (YNP010)
Subject: INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER DAY

Dear International Subscriber,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our bi-annual Newspaper Day competition for schools. This has become a major event on the calendar of schools suscribing to the services offered by Campus 2000 and organisers have quickly recognised the development of teamwork, decision-making, individual initiative and leadership skills through the involvement in producing a newspaper. In March 1990 up to 200 UK and International schools will participate in this the sixth Newspaper Day Competition, producing newspapers that will be submitted to a panel of distinguished judges drawn from the circles of top media personalities, politicians and professional journalists chaired by Sir Edward Pickering, Vice Chairman of The Times Newspapers Ltd.

The aim of the Newspaper Day is for groups of school children to produce real newspapers to real deadlines, to be distributed within their local community, usually for charity. To make this possible, a selection of school children, as young journalists, are invited to staff an electronic News Agency. The News Agency creates news reports using authentic material provided by The Times, The Sunday Times, Today and The Sun, which are distributed via electronic mail to all participating schools. These articles are then edited and collated using DTP software or traditional 'cut and paste' methods. At the end of the day, the newspaper is distributed to the local community, just like the real thing.

On the 22nd March is the International/Primary school competition and Campus 2000 would like to encourage as many international entries as possible. The competition this March is being sponsored by TANDON Computers (UK) which will ensure a range of quality computer prizes for the winning newspapers.

If you would like further information about the competition type INFO NEWSDAY at the system prompt or mail me on TCD025.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future and I hope your school will be able to participate in both an exciting and educational competition.

Yours faithfully, Lisa Rozario, Project Co-ordinator, CAMPUS 2000"

Even if this project was meant for primary schools, the Finnish teachers acknowledged the interest this kind of project could arouse in their schools as well. In this sense, one of the purposes of my e-mail project was fulfilled, i.e., opening up new horizons, making FL teachers realise new opportunities accessible to them with the aid of computer-mediated communication and e-mail. In my opinion, heightening the teachers' awareness of various possibilities tends to gear their activities towards more Europeanised or internationalised activities in FL classrooms. In this Finland is not, of course, alone (cf. e.g., Bee-Lay & Yee-Ping 1991). As one or two Japanese schools also participated in the activities of the Global Village, we Finns could realise that there was something similar being thought over. Noriko's letter finely summarises some of the questions, to which proper answers should and will be searched for in the near future:

"From: KDD045 Delivered: Tue 27-Feb-90 3:33 Sys 10001
To: School C
Subject: INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

Dear Global Village friends,

I'd like to know if you have a teaching principle to promote 'International understanding education' in your school or in your country. Japanese people have been pointed out to lack the sense of internationalization. So there has been a trend in the field of education which requires us teachers in schools to promote 'international understanding education' for more than 10 years. In fact I once worked at a high school, which was designated as a model school to obtain the object by the Ministry of Education. We positively accept the exchange students, have the friendship exchange event with Asian-African Rural Institute, or Indonesian school in Tokyo and give our students a chance to think and discuss the problems all over the world using the video tapes or some clippings from the newspapers and the magazines. (Now I work at a different high school, which is a model school of computer literacy. That's why we are lucky enough to join this world-wide network, TTNS.) After such trials at model schools, with a lot of research results on this project most of the schools are encouraged to do something. Some schools have the meetings with students from overseas. Some have a lecture on the subject related to the internationalization, or possible cultural, industrial, academic exchange between Japan and foreign countries. Others have their own exchange-

ing programs with their sister schools abroad. There are a variety of activities.

1. A certain American told us that they have no word like 'internationalization'. Is it true to each of your country?
2. Do you have this kind of educational policy in your country?
3. If you do, what activity do you have in your class?
4. Even if you don't have the same concept as the one I explained, you might have some similar activity, or discussion and research in classes to understand the world situation. What are they? And what do you call that education treatment?
5. Will you tell me any comment or anything else which has something to do with my topic?

Perhaps this is not my turn to send a message for this time being. But I've held above questions for a long time. So will you kindly give me replies concerning these when you have time?

Best wishes, Noriko"

7.1.30. Focusing the Subject Matter

In this chapter, some concluding remarks will be made on the themes and topics introduced, collaboratively ratified and therefore continued, and carried through on one hand, observed and analysed on the other. The summary will partly be built on topic continuity (topical coherence collaboratively accepted) or topic discontinuity (once only or closed down vs. continuing or collaboratively ratified and sustained themes), topicality or non-topicality of the theme discussed, initiative taking, i.e., where the initiative of starting discussing a theme arose from (on one hand, teacher—student—researcher; on the other hand, Finnish participants vs. foreign participants). Another dimension is to think of the way the theme was carried through, i.e., in what sort of configuration (teacher-monitored seating chart, i.e., teacher-fronted procedures or activities in general; dyadic or small group work; individual or autonomous work). This last dimension mainly deals with the *participation structure* of the classroom, discussed in Tella (1991; cf. e.g., Doyle 1986; see also van Lier 1986, 168—169).

The 'Never-ending Story' (cf. Tella 1991, 190—191), for instance, represented a collaborative class story (an epistolary story) and a medium range project, advancing little by little. The story was launched and marked as new in School B by one of the working groups; they set up the first episode, the next one was left to the British, then it was thought to be the turn of the Finnish students again, etc. A US school finally also participated in writing two

episodes. Possible topical coherence was consequently planned to be constructed across consecutive overseas and home turns, but it was *not* negotiated mutually with the foreign partner school in the first place. In this sense, it was a potential topic held out for the others to catch, a random succession of e-mails to be composed by both Finns and foreigners. In the first place, the recipients were regarded by the Finnish students as generic addressees, of whom any or all could solicit the next episode (turn or move). Besides, it was obviously sent as an assignment to profit a lot from quick or at least not-too-delayed rejoinders. While waiting for the next episode, the Finnish writers were free to do something else, to write poetry for instance, which they did. A certain degree of topical coherence *was* achieved, thanks to foreign contributions. The story also represented a small group work which was not shared by the rest of the class. It represented topic continuity but only in a limited way, because after the starting-point no other Finnish students could join the original team. Thus it represented a closed project in Finland, but it opened up abroad, as anybody was invited to write the next episode. It also represented a literary (narrative) theme in that writing further episodes called for some imagination or creativity and experiential learning in that it was concerned with developing human potential (cf. e.g., Henry 1991).

Some other themes, like food, also had a high topic continuity and topical coherence while being more prosaic and not consisting intrinsically of an interactionally negotiable issue; everybody could say something about his eating habits or tell about his favourite foods, but did not necessarily want to. How to eat unhealthily seemed to interest students somewhat more. These two themes also differed in that the 'Never-ending Story' was more linear in character, although it could have branched into various subplots, had more people participated. Food, on the other hand, can be seen as a global theme, approachable from various angles without having to build on the previous episode too closely. A lot of other themes were more reciprocal, like student profiles, which were meant to generate replies from several recipients. Besides, the student profiles could perhaps be called a topic as such; they easily lent themselves to various themes and continuational subthemes if only the recipient cared to catch the point.

A lot of the themes discussed did not lose their topicality very soon: food, hobbies, descriptions of local circumstances, for instance. In general, many of these themes were also mentioned in the printed FL curriculum (Anon. 1985). The more topical the theme was, the more rapidly it should have been taken up in FL class-

rooms in order to gain from the novel character of the state of affairs. The political developments in Europe represented these kinds of themes, impossible to predict in advance but which could well be approached via e-mail. The South Pole expedition, accessible through DUDANT on Campus 2000, also represented a kind of *feuilleton*, whose topical value could be sensed *expressis verbis* then and there but much less if presented months later when it was common knowledge that the expedition had managed to reach the South Pole. Another theme, although much more prosaic, was the weather. As Britain happened to suffer from several harsh storms at the beginning of the fieldwork period and as one of the foreign participating teachers was a specialist in meteorology, this theme arose from ordinary (partly phatic) small-talk or social-chat level (usually limiting the range of discussion) to a serious topic, which also helped two Finnish teachers—the language teacher and the physics teacher—co-operate at school level.

Computer-mediated communication also provided the participating classes with new ways of looking at some traditional activities. As an example, e-mail was an efficient electronic means of sending season greetings at Christmas and at Easter as well as exchanging some St. Valentine's greetings on February 14th.

Many of the themes discussed and carried through arose from the current FL curriculum. These themes were mainly initiated by the teachers themselves. In this way, they obviously wanted to incorporate the e-mail project into their ordinary classroom schedules. Some of the themes, such as diseases in School B, were generated by the textbook material, which helped the students master special vocabulary, which was necessary when talking about this theme. What made the situation more versatile was the fact that quite a range of themes were nominated by the foreign participants or by the Finnish students, who did not feel restricted by the "official" curriculum. One major source for themes was Campus 2000 with its conferences, databases, and noticeboards.

Naturally, some of the themes concerned the teachers themselves, e.g., curricula, teacher education, FL teaching and learning, Information Technology with reference to foreign languages, etc.

Not many themes were rejected or totally abandoned, although there were themes which did not generate much discussion through e-mail but were treated in classrooms. One of the themes beyond the scope of Finnish senior secondary schools was felt to be the discussion of English literary texts and the respective comparisons and perspectives on English literature. Literature is included in the Finnish FL curriculum, but it is approached somewhat differ-

ently from the traditional way they still adopt in Britain. More emphasis was spontaneously laid on creative work and poetry. The most popular theme "Happiness", for instance, combined two literary forms, poetry and fiction, but it also allowed students to express their feelings in whatever stylistic way they chose to use. One of the themes suggested by Teacher A's partner teacher was fairytales or traditional stories. This was not taken up during fieldwork, although the 'Never-ending Story' in a way corresponded to this theme on a fictional plane.

Generating new themes did not stop after the first initial planning sessions. In School B, for instance, the groups continued to take up new themes during fieldwork. Some of the themes were dropped almost as suddenly as they had been suggested by the students, but some were started, halted, and then resumed again, so a certain degree of cyclicity took place in this regard.

When we compare the contents (themes, topics) the students and their teachers accessed during the fieldwork period by using computer-mediated communication and one or two international communications networks, it is easy to conclude that the range of contents greatly exceeded the range of themes suggested for the courses to be studied during the respective study periods. Even if the course topics designed for the FL curriculum are rather loose and only meant to offer miscellaneous ways to deal with the main theme of the course, they are, however, more closely connected to the main theme than the range of themes now discussed. On the other hand, not all aspects of the themes were dealt with via e-mail. It would rather appear that the requirements set in the FL curriculum were happily complemented by the e-mail project. E-mails brought in a lot of new and topical materials and perspectives which were adroitly incorporated into their teaching by the teachers. As the e-mail approach necessitated the acquaintance of a number of foreign participants, this introduced and rehearsed some language functions students had learned and practised earlier. At the same time, at least if some high communication proximity links were established between the Finnish and foreign schools, the Finnish students—and in the same way the foreign participants as well—faced linguistic situations in which they had to use their command of language fairly holistically, using all their language skills and proficiency while producing coherent language material to the foreign participants. I feel tempted to conclude that this was one of the major advantages of the e-mail project, its *raison d'être*; creating linguistic situations which necessitated target language use of global character, not only at object language level but also at

discourse language level, and, perhaps, at the same time, heightening students' metalinguistic awareness of their language proficiency.

Focusing, organising, and highlighting the subject matter via e-mail differ from the ways needed and practised *vis-à-vis* the printed materials. As explained in Tella (1991, 7–8), a reader-centred or reader-monitored approach authenticates incoming e-mail messages through appropriate ways of responding to them. In this way, genuine language material will be validated through naturalistic use of it, making the language situation more motivating than just responding to printed material that does not react back. The awareness of the fact that outgoing messages were read, studied, and assessed by real human beings, in most cases by students of a similar age, or, as teachers go, by an overseas colleague, raised the motivational factor built in the practice sessions. Attention was mainly focused on *what* was being said (topic orientation), not *how* it was said (grammar orientation or geared towards the linguistic code), which is one of the fundamental principles of a communicative methodology (cf. Brumfit 1980; Brumfit 1984; Clarke 1989; Doctor 1989; Marton 1988; Tarone & Yule 1989).

E-mail may also lay focus on other aspects of the same theme. i.e., topical coherence can be shifted from one aspect to another or one aspect may be leavened interactively, through different activities or points of view or by means of new media. In Course 5, for instance, three of the subthemes suggested in the FL curriculum are information technology, computers, and information retrieval. Studying this theme by doing was what e-mail brought into the foreground. The theme was approached 'from within', in a way, also through the possible problems and logistic hitches which arose in the process of using new media. Briefly, this could be called an activity-oriented approach, as these themes could be lived through, not only studied, and the students were able to get an insider's view of the theme.

Inversely, other subthemes, suggested by the curriculum, risked being studied more superficially or not at all. All Finnish teachers noticed that introducing e-mail into their FL classrooms took not only time but also room from other themes and activities. However, the themes left aside were not regarded more important, in the final analysis. Besides, as not everything could be done in a limited range of time, computer-mediated communication concededly brought another new dimension into FL teaching.

In addition, as the whole project was implemented if not in real time at least in a rather short and limited range of time in re-

gard to initiating new themes and responding to them, the participants had ample chance to change and modify the direction of discussion, the choice of themes and topics, they could feel free to ask further questions, to ask for additional information or simply volunteer to bring up new issues to be talked over or to be negotiated across the participants near and afield. In sum, not all planning was done by the teachers alone. In addition to that, the cognitive context of a lesson, i.e., the selection of suitable subject matter, as defined by van Lier (1986, 166), tended to get modified, to some extent at least, according to the learners' wishes. Consequently, the whole set-up of the fieldwork period proved more flexible and participant-oriented than the ordinary classroom situation usually could be with fixed timetables and goals and aims set firmly in advance and linked directly to the official curriculum.

7.2. Language of E-Mail Communication

The following chapter will analyse English as the Finnish students' first foreign language used in the e-mail correspondence between the Finnish and foreign students, teachers, and myself. Some emphasis will be laid upon how teachers reacted to the mistakes their students made, what sort of aspects came forth languagewise, and what kind of problems arose from the practical computer-mediated communication environment in FL classrooms.

In the theoretical part, it was mentioned that linguistic misunderstandings may arise at various levels, for example if the researcher does not understand the *argot* used by the observed. From the Finnish point of view, the *argot* in the present study consisted essentially of the FL specific use of language (English) in senior secondary schools. On the other hand, when several cultures were involved, the danger to misinterpret other participants' messages was even more imminent. In addition, the intrinsic nature of computer-mediated communication might have given rise to misconceptions if not handled with care. Lack of non-verbal communication, for instance, might have jeopardised mutual understanding if words were used and interpreted too bluntly. The phenomenon of expressing extreme opinions and venting anger openly through e-mail is sometimes called "flaming" (cf. e.g., Sproull & Kiesler 1991, 87). An ethnographic approach partly helped to alleviate possible difficulties with the aid of careful and thorough observation of the participants together with further data gathering techniques.

When thinking of how contents and language can be combined in FL classrooms, it might be worth remembering that not all researchers argue for this kind of dual combination. Hellgren (1986), for instance, cautions against the possible dangers concerning the students: "If the finding that pupils mainly concentrate on the subject matter is true, it means that attention must be paid to the form of language and its function separately. Thus, for example, a lot of extensive reading of foreign-language texts does not necessarily improve the person's linguistic knowledge if he does not particularly focus on the language elements as well. In classroom conversations, foreign language teachers are capable of doing the dual task because of their interest in the language. Ordinary pupils act differently, and do not always notice the linguistic forms. On the other hand, teachers may neglect the subject matter in class in drawing excessive attention to the correct forms of the language. An optimal state for teaching is perhaps achieved if the two tasks are mainly operated on at different times." (Hellgren 1986, 120)

Hellgren's observations can be interpreted as a suggestion not to combine the two levels, linguistic and subject matter, without adequate judgment. As to computer-mediated communication and e-mail, the main focus is automatically on subject matter, on themes and topics, so that attention to be paid to linguistic forms and codes is usually of secondary importance. In this sense, e-mail communication reinforces functional, non-nomothetic, creative, and experientially message-centred features (cf. Bosco & Di Pietro 1970; Stern 1983) unless information about the language or about its culture is specifically given. In this chapter, focus will mainly be on the linguistic elements of e-mail communication, i.e., more emphasis will be laid on non-functional, nomothetic, and formally language-centred features.

7.2.1. Error Correction and Censorship

Mistakes and errors can occur at various levels of communicative proficiency. They may be related to competence or performance. Errors of competence usually break the linguistic code and bring about misunderstanding or total incomprehensibility. Errors of this kind form the basic research target of error analysis. Mistakes, on the other hand, though also connected to competence, are often against style but not language code (or grammatical forms), e.g., talking about automatic data processing or ADP (instead of Information Technology or IT) to the specialists in CALL, for instance, is a stylistic (and anachronistic) mistake, but it does not hamper communication.

As to performance, mistakes or lapses are often due to tiredness or nervousness. Global errors or mistakes (wrong word-order; wrong conjunction, poor spelling, etc.) often affect the discourse level; local errors or mistakes (articles, verb forms, number, etc.) often affect single things and are more easily ignored, as they do not hamper communication as such. It has to be borne in mind, however, that even one wrong word can change the meaning of the sentence completely and become an impediment to communication.

One of the basic principles of a communicative methodology is that errors and mistakes are signs of progress and can therefore contribute substantially to the learning process. Besides, not all mistakes are corrected in language classrooms any more. In conversational stages of the lesson, for instance, teachers tend to ignore learners' mistakes or they may indirectly and discreetly correct these mistakes in their own responses, without referring to them

too directly. When more focus is laid on content than on form, error correction is not a simple matter, either (cf. e.g., Allan 1991).

When mistakes in e-mail communication are analysed, one thing has to be remembered: many of the e-mails were prepared in small groups or in dyads so that the teacher and I myself were helping students whenever help was asked for. In many cases, slight spelling mistakes or lexical difficulties were corrected during the course of the writing process. This was such a natural way of working that it would have been unwise not to do it. Naturally, this makes it more difficult to evaluate what sort of mistakes were left uncorrected by chance or voluntarily. On the other hand, with reference to the e-mails already presented in this report, a lot of different kinds of mistakes and typing errors, however, still remained in them.

The main focus in this chapter, however, lies elsewhere. It is important to analyse, first of all, how the participating teachers viewed and experienced the situation, how easily or reluctantly they accepted the fact that some mistakes still remained in outgoing messages or how easily they agreed on the fact that it might not have been that important even to try to correct all mistakes. Besides, when messages were written on-line, not all mistakes could be corrected for technical reasons. For instance, as it was difficult to go back to the lines already typed (after the writer had pressed <RETURN>), mistakes might have had to be left there even if the student himself or the teacher happened to notice them a little later. This often occurred among the teachers as well, both in Finland and abroad, e.g.,

To: Teacher C1

From: YLP059

Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 18:48 Sys 10001 (399)

Subject: First communications to [Teacher C1]

I have written a little piece on the school and a few of our students have written a short piece about themselves, just to 'break the ice'. Sent as written by them, so it includes their mistakes! Maybe soon the students should give their view of the school! and I should do a profile of myself (all to be revealed!) in the future.
All the best, George."

To: Global Village Schools

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 22:27 Sys 12762 (6)

Subject: Feedback (...)

I think my students got interested in all this and hopefully also noticed how useful this is for language learning purposes. (Forgive typing er-

rors—I'm doing this directly on e-mail without using a wordprocessor this time). (...)

I wanted to write this letter to you before we sent our Finnish Newsletter (read: send) so that you can see that we have been following what happens in the Global Village although we haven't really sent you any e-mail so far. my class will contribute to the Finnish Newsletter, which I think will appear very soon.

Best wishes to all, [Teacher C. (...)]
P.S. Don't care about the typing errors."

Part of the feeling of "being guilty" when writing on-line with lots of typing and other errors can be got rid of when the writers—both teachers and students—are reminded of the fact that practically no one writing at present, as Petelin (1991, 282) aptly put it, actually learnt to write on-line.

In the beginning, the Finnish teachers were of the opinion that they would have to check all the student contributions linguistically before they could be sent. Teacher B, for instance, argued like this:

"To: YOJ002 (10001:YOJ002)
From: Teacher B Delivered: Sat 10-Feb-90 13:16 Sys 1276)
Subject: Re 07.02.

Dear Lawrence,

Concerning last Wednesday, I had some difficulty in sending the message to you as you could well see. Sorry about that. Anyway, there was also another matter I somehow managed to blow. I had namely planned to revise my students' texts and even did so. Unfortunately I had forgotten to do some preliminary checks as to the mode of saving, and that was it. In any case I hope the messages come across well enough to be understandable.

With best wishes

[Teacher B]

P.S. I wonder if it is asking too much to request you or your students to exercise some censorship as far as our language is concerned. We would also be more than grateful for any comments for our information."

Teacher B corrected his students' essays rather conscientiously. The next fieldnote tells about his working habits; the students first wrote a draft with pen and paper; the drafts were marked as any compositions written in FL teaching, then finalised by the students themselves:

"The teacher had prepared the students' contributions in that he had printouts of each group's texts; he had marked them with suggestions and corrections. Now it was the students' turn to make all the corrections on the computer. This reminded me of Lawrence's idea of hav-

ing frequent pen-and-paper work before finalising the texts on the computers." (A fieldnote in School B on May 2nd, 1990)

As to methods of work, this worked well in that ordinary classrooms could be used as well for the preparation of outgoing messages. In schools with only a few computers altogether this would probably still be one of the best ways to combine pen-and-paper and computer work. However, towards the end of the fieldwork period at the latest all the Finnish teachers started realising that slight mistakes in spelling and in grammar were of minor importance and could be ignored, if not altogether, at least to the extent which allowed them to comment more on the subject matter. The teachers, however, were always ready to suggest some editing hints to the students, where commas or periods should be inserted and how the general layout and mechanics of the composition could be made better. Lexical problems were more important, because the teachers as well as I myself constantly had to be helping the students with difficult terms.

The e-mail below is one of the student contributions as it was sent from School B the following week. Having e's with an accent aigu (é) instead of apostrophes (') in the version read by the recipient is one of the technical hitches that often occurred. On the student's screen they looked like proper apostrophes, but some communications software, if not properly installed to match the national character set, often changed them into accent aigus. Mistakes figuring in this composition were not corrected by the teacher or by me. Spelling reflects the student's faulty typing skills, as sentences are written together, among other things.

"To: YS0007 (10001:YS0007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Tue 9-Jan-90 9:55 Sys 12762 (1) (...)

In Finland we have three channels which everybody can see. But in town are as we have lot of other channels. In [a neighbouring town], for example which is ten kilometers from here, there are sixteen channels: Sky, super, film-net, Eurosport, worldnet and some others.

We donét know exactly what kind of programs you have there in Hors-

ham but we suppose so that they donét differ much from ours. Typical TV-programs are here: News comes out seven times a day, different serials like Dynasty, Matlock, Crime story, Dallas and so on. Sports comes out every day and the Finns love it (we are a national sports maniacs). Films are also shown every night.

M(...)"

As to correcting mistakes, students worked in different ways in different groups and classes, so there was no single way of tackling this question. Drafts were often written before anything was stored on a diskette, but not every draft was gathered by the teacher or even left to him. Sometimes I had a chance of giving more general guidelines regarding spelling, for instance. In School B a group of girls once asked me whether 'entrance examination' should be written as one word or not, which was an ideal occasion to give a more general rule to the effect that when they were unsure of compound words it might be safer to write them as two words, which, in many cases anyway, would be correct. The problem often seemed to be that in Finnish students wrote too many compound words as two separate words, but in English too many separate words as one word only.

In order to give an idea of what kind of mistakes were corrected, a few e-mails will be compared in the following in their original (uncorrected) and final (corrected and transmitted) versions. Out of the eight letters by Teacher C1's students to Mr Gorbachev, four were available in two versions, both original and corrected by Teacher C1. As an example, the second letter is shown as marked by me in order to make it easier to see the points corrected by Teacher C1 (see below).

Original 1

- "-are you going to use violence against the Baltic countries?
- whay are you going to do for solving the problems whith the national minorities in the USSR?
- what have you studied in university?
- what would you do for avoiding a third wordwar?
- what do you think of the era of Stalin?
- Why is your birth mole always improved in russian newspaper pictures
- What do You think about the situation of Lithuania? (...)"

Corrected 2

- "-are you going to use violence against the Baltic countries?
- what are you going to do for solving the problems whith the national minorities in the USSR?
- what have you studied in university?
- what would you do for avoiding a third world war?
- what do you think of the era of Stalin?
- Why is your birth mole always improved in russian newspaper pictures
- What do You think about the situation of Lithuania? (...)"

Original 2

"We are very worried about the situation in Lithuania. If Moscow will choose using force, we will fight for independence of Lithuania. You are given 24 hours to draw back the troops from Lithuania. After that Finland will attack. If you didn't know, we have a powerful arm, and airforce that's increditful you can't do anything if we decide to attack. You musn't forget our navy, which is the best in anywere. So let Lithuania became independent. We know that we aren't the only country in Europe who will attack, and the USA will attack for sure! You know that you shouldn't use violence but we know that you can never trust a Russian. We hope that you undrestand the importance of democracy because a nation cannot nowadays develop normally without democracy."

Corrected 2

"We are very worried about the situation in Lithuania. If Moscow chooses using force, we will fight for independence of Lithuania. You are given 24 hours to draw back the troops from Lithuania. After that Finland will attack. If you didn't know, we have a powerful army, and an airforce that's incredible. You can't do anything if we decide to attack. You musn't forget our navy, which is the best anywhere. So let Lithuania become independent. We know that we aren't the only country in Europe who will attack, and the USA will attack for sure! You know that you shouldn't use violence, but we know that you can never trust a Russian. We hope that you undrestand the importance of democracy because a nation cannot nowadays develop normally without democracy."

Original 3

"Hallo Misha!

You've got quite a mess there. Try to keep your self-control on. We know it must be hard to run such a big country as USSR. Do you think there's going to be the Third World War in the future between the United States and USSR?"

Corrected 3

"Hallo Misha!

You've got quite a mess there. Try to keep your self-control on. We know it must be hard to run such a big country as USSR. Do you think there's going to be the Third World War in the future between the United States and the USSR? (...)"

Original 4

"How did you become a president of CCCP?
 What do you think about the unification of German?
 What is going to happen to Lithuania?
 What about your family? How many children do you have?
 Have you got Mafia there?
 Are you the boss of Mafia?
 Do you like KGB?
 What are you afraid of?
 What is your opinion of pollution?
 We hope you don't use any spray can (with freon)?"

Corrected 4

"How did you become the president of the USSR?
 What do you think about the unification of Germany?
 What is going to happen to Lithuania?
 What about your family? How many children do you have?
 Have you got Mafia there?
 Are you the boss of Mafia?
 Do you like KGB?
 What are you afraid of?
 What is your opinion of pollution?
 We hope you don't use any spray cans (with freon)? (...)"

On the basis of these examples, Teacher C1 apparently did not ask for any syntactic or discourse level changes, e.g., paragraphs to be moved from one place to another, calling for global text planning strategies, which usually lead to thematically more coherent texts. Local planning strategies, such as those in the first pair of letters and dealing mainly with the mechanics of writing and lexical choices usually add nothing to thematic coherence but usually make texts more cohesive and more readable, of course. Teacher C1's leniency could also show something of the epistemological—discursive flexibility Boyd (1987) combines with computer-mediated communications systems.

Most of the corrections have been focused on local mistakes, mainly spelling or prepositions, although not all spelling mistakes have been corrected (*whith, *russian, *You). Some verb constructions have also been checked (let — became -> let — become; the future tense in an if-clause changed into the present tense). As to lexis, a few awkward mistakes have been changed. 'Arm', for instance, has been changed to 'army'. The missing '-y' probably would

not have caused serious misunderstanding (unless, possibly, a short communication breakdown), but *incrediful (instead of 'incredible' in all probability would have. The use of articles in English is quite difficult for Finnish speakers of English, as there are no formal articles in the Finnish language to compare with. 'A president of CCCP' includes two mistakes which have been corrected. Punctuation has been slightly touched upon, but not everything has been changed.

I already contended (Tella 1991; cf. also Kemble & Brierley 1991) that a dedicated electronic spelling checker could be used in conjunction with a word-processor in order to do away with unnecessary typing errors. In the above e-mails, it would probably have found words like *incrediful, *anywere, *whay, *whith, *undrestand, and perhaps 'worldwar'. 'CCCP' would also have stopped the speller. Except these words, a number of other lexical items would have been left untouched, e.g., 'arm', 'became', 'German', as they would have been correct forms in some other context. Manual checking or teacher's guidance was therefore well needed.

My questionnaire to the Finnish teachers (May 1990) included two questions (3.6.5 and 3.6.6) concerning the way the teachers corrected students' contributions (cf. Tella 1991, 164). Teacher A answered that she had decided to correct as little as possible but as the low achievers of her classes sometimes wrote incomprehensible messages, she felt compelled to guide them to correct the language, but she did not try to correct her students' letters regarding the external format (Teacher A, questionnaire, May 1990).

Teacher B did not answer the former question at all ("To what extent did you correct the English language in your students' letters?"), and very laconically "I hardly did" to the latter concerning the layout of the letters (Teacher B, questionnaire, May 1990). According to my observations and some e-mails, Teacher B did give his students a helping hand from time to time, and sometimes corrected the drafts in the same way as FL compositions usually are read and marked.

Teacher C1's policy was quite different; he answered that he had tried to correct as much as possible, allowing the students compare their originals and the corrected versions. He did not, however, check the layout of the students' e-mails that much (Teacher C1, questionnaire, May 1990).

As to Teacher C2, she answered that she had corrected all the mistakes she had noticed and had been able to correct (Teacher C2, questionnaire, May 1990). On the whole, the Finnish teachers' attitudes towards their students' contributions could be described as

lenient and supportive. They fully realised that the exchange of ideas and experiences could not develop if the students got the impression that their e-mails were being changed too radically.

As the teacher was also the sender of the messages in the majority of cases, the question of censorship has to be considered. The teachers would naturally have had an influence on the students' writings if they had suggested something to be left out or to be replaced by more suitable contents. However, nothing of the sort was observed during the fieldwork period. On the contrary, it seemed to me that the teachers encouraged their students to express themselves as they thought best.

Nevertheless, a complete degree of independence was not achieved during the fieldwork period, as the students were not in general allowed to transmit their e-mails themselves. However, in School A, one of the boys, a specialist in Information Technology, was occasionally asked to help transmit the contributions written by the students. On the whole, whether the situation would have changed if one or some of the students had been permitted to assume the responsibility of all the transmissions of the messages is open to speculation.

The only examples of some kind of censorship or diplomatic caution were witnessed in Teacher C1's class. Teacher C1 first sent the questionable letters to me, asked for my opinion, and when encouraged to send them to the Global Village, did so but apologised for some opinions of his students (cf. also Tella 1991, 187—189):

"To: Global Village Schools
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Wed 18-Apr-90 11:52 Sys 12762 (2)
Subject: Letters to Gorbachev

Dear friends in the Global Village

My students decided to write some letters to the President of the USSR after I had mentioned them about this opportunity. We had two computer lessons towards the end of our 6-week course for that. Here are their letters. As you can easily see, some of them have very strong and serious views about the situation in the USSR, especially in the Baltic states as they are so near to us. Some of the students were not so serious. Anyway, here you can see some young Finns' views freely expressed. I don't think they differ a lot about other people's opinions in the western world, but if you find anything worth commenting in them please do that. (...) Remember that they are about 16-year-olds."

This kind of teacher behaviour can also be called *steersmanship* or *cybernetic prescription* (Boyd 1987, 153), as the teacher realises certain implicit rules are about to be broken and he feels the need to intervene in order to establish the proper working atmosphere.

To my mind, Letters to Mr Gorbachev should have aimed at a business-like style, trying to deal with a most delicate situation seriously enough. Both Teacher C1 and I tried to explain this viewpoint to his Form 1 students. Yet some teams tried to write jokes; this time they were simply not capable or willing to write serious-minded letters nor to adopt a reflective attitude towards an issue that was rather delicate at the time of writing in many respects.

Not all Letters to Mr Gorbachev were sent to the English partner school students or to the Global Village network, as some of the students' questions were considered by Teacher C1 just too impolite and rude, although he admitted the students were just 'showing off'. Here are two student contributions in their original versions, of which no corrected versions were ever made or sent by Teacher C1 anywhere else than to me:

"To: TELLA.SEPP0 (TBX850)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Thu 29-Mar-90 9:38 Sys
12762 (12)
Subject: Gorbas (...)

Hello!

How are you today?

We are quite well just a little tired, that's all.

We would like to know few things about you.

1.What is your education?

2.How long days do you make?

3.What perfum does your wife use?

4.Do you argue a lot?

5.Do you use boxer shorts or tangas?

6.What is your favourite TV program?

7.Where do you buy those lovely furhats?

8.How many cars do you have?

9.Have you got enough food?

10.Do you enjoy the meetings of Soviet Unions
communist party? Thank you very much!

11.Do you like milk

12.How old is your wife? (...)

What is your whole name?
 Do you drink vodka?
 Why don't just leave the Lithuania alone?
 What will you do with Baltians countries?
 Is Stalin your idol?
 How old are you?
 What do you think about Germanies unification?
 Is russian food good?
 Do you like hamburgers?
 Is there any drug users in USSR?
 Would you like to buy Alaska back?(We are selling).
 We want Karelia back!!!
 We have nothing to add.
 Do you use Lada?(Saab is much worser)
 Are you interested in porno? (...)"

On the other hand, the way Teacher C1's students dealt with these letters clearly manifested the open atmosphere in his class, so they felt free to express themselves as they wished, without having to fear anything from their teacher's side. The question, of course, is how far the teacher can and is willing to let his students go before tightening up the discipline (the degree of *steersmanship* or *cybernetic prescription*). Teacher C1 did censor one student letter—he did not send it to Britain, although he informed his partner school teacher, Mr Brown, about his decision:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 14-May-90 20:29 Sys 12762 (5)

Subject: A student letter from finland

Hi George

(...) Some boys also wrote a letter to Karen who seemed to have made quite an impact on them. I won't send it anyway because it was a bit wild (Best regards to Karen from the nthree Finnish boys, anyway (...)"

Given that all this took place at the end of the fieldwork period, I did not notice the censored letter until the summer of 1990 when going through the e-mails. I then asked Teacher C1 to send it to me through e-mail. I do agree with Teacher C1 that this letter overdid it, but the question still remains whether it is up to the teacher to censor any of the students' contributions. By this point of the project I had also changed my mind in regard to whether we should have tried to persuade students to express themselves in a fashion we thought business-like and appropriate but they did not. I was glad to realise that students had been obstinate enough to write as they had wished and preferred. The question of cybernetic prescription

surely concerns the borderline of bad taste but perhaps teachers—and researchers—should not try to influence students' opinions at all as far as content and form are concerned in free expression.—Here is the letter censored by Teacher C1:

To: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850)
 From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Sun 26-Aug-90 16:12 Sys 12762 (250)
 Subject: last spring's letters

hi Seppo

Here are the letters you asked for (I found them on the diskettes):

1) to karen (not sent—to my mind too obscene

Hello Karen-Rasputin-Karen

Why have you not been writing to us you sonofabitch! P(...) has been dancing with himself again. When he dances he is quite dangerous and somebody might get hurt! P(...) knows everything about drugs.

That's why he dances so well. He also threw up on P(...) s bed.

Actually—we like P(...) —sometimes. When he had one of his times he began to talk about you. Have you really met in Sri Lanka?

Did you know that we have a really wonderful english teacher.

He is called (...). He never senses our products.

How are you doing?....Fine.

Blah Blah BAH! lahb HABL. (...)"

One of the Canadian teachers, Mr Owen, was also somewhat apologetic concerning any possible profane language used by his students:

"#1 10-DEC-1989 22:57:02.71

From: IN%"USERNBSPÉSFU.BITNET" "Trevor Owen"

To: TELLAÉcc.Helsinki.FI

Hi Seppo. Glad you got the writing and think it's OK. No rush here. Our students finish their classes tomorrow (Monday December 11/89) and start writing exams on Tuesday. Holidays begin Dec. 22 and we return on Jan. 8/90. So, whatever works well for you is fine. I just thought you might like to have some examples. If any of your teachers and/or classes want to respond, I know our students would be thrilled. (...) Oh yes. Some of the pieces contain profane language. I do not know whether this would bother you or any of the people likely to read the material. Indeed, I do not know whether the students would know some of the profane words—does this present the teacher with a problem? In any event, in the case of original writing, we are not concerned by the use of language in this way unless it pre-

sents itself as gratuitous, which hardly ever happens, actually. Anyway, I thought I'd better mention it.
Cheers Trevor"

In Mr Owen's letter, there is a sound principle for the teachers to follow; if the profane language used by the student is gratuitous, i.e., used without good reason, then the teacher might feel it justified to point it out to the students. Otherwise, most probably, making a mental note would suffice.

7.2.2. Levels of Formality

In this chapter, an account will be made of the levels of formality used in e-mail communication during the fieldwork period. The question is concerned with style and language registers, and it is closely related to the intrinsic nature of computer-mediated communication in general (cf. Tella 1991, 28–34).

Style can consist of a number of levels of formality, such as frozen or stiff; formal; neutral; consultative; informal or colloquial; casual, and intimate. On the other hand, we often refer to styles like humorous, ironic, poetic, literary, etc. Moreover, stylistic choice may reflect role-related assumptions; we write differently to a superior, for example. (Cf. e.g., Gairns & Redman 1986, 20; Kantor & Rubin 1981, 59) Computer-mediated communication and e-mail in particular tends to accentuate informal features of communication so that an e-mail, although a written product, may resemble oral language in many respects. Besides, as Dam, Legenhausen & Wolff (1990, 333) pointed out, informal everyday language is also characterised by the high degree of tolerance towards deviant structures in other people's use of language. When analysing the e-mails gathered, it must be borne in mind that most of the students were young adults or teenagers, so it could be assumed that their ordinary way of expressing themselves is relatively casual or at least informal, while their teachers could be expected to behave somewhat more formally. Teaching English as a first foreign language is also concerned with letter writing, i.e., ways how a letter should be started, one's main business stated, and how an appropriate greeting should be chosen as a closing at the end of the letter. In this sense, writing through e-mail may be contradictory to what at least some of the students already were accustomed to doing, i.e., to using certain formulae while writing their letters in English.

As for the Finnish teachers themselves, it could be further assumed that it would be more difficult for them to abandon acknowl-

edged formulae unless they observe closely how their foreign partner teachers address them and how the native speakers of English modify customary and traditional ways of politeness in computer-mediated communication.

It is understandable that e-mail communication may, in its first stages of development, be used to emulate conventionally accepted letter writing traditions. However, it is important to become aware, as soon as possible, of the intrinsic nature of e-mail communication, its inner qualities, in order to make full use of its capacity. Aston (1990), for instance, cautions against difficulties of assessing the quality of text flowing around an e-mail system but puts forward some aspects by observation. In his opinion, originators of 'letter'-type text are less concerned with grammar, spelling as well as completeness and structure of their messages. Though some users adopt a brief, telex style, there are many advocates of 'it should look like a proper letter' style as well, although ordinary 'pen-and-paper' letters and e-mail do not easily cross-fertilise. One of the most important factors affecting the quality of the e-mails is whether the original text was developed on a word-processor or simply on-line. (Aston 1990, 247) E-mail communication may further underline the writing process better than ordinary CALL-based software, as all the writers of e-mails are also expected to assume the role of readers in turn. In this sense, it approaches some general features connected to distance learning.

Writing letters was of course not the only purpose for using e-mail. Other linguistic materials were also exchanged, such as short articles, descriptions, and analyses, in which a more business-like and formal register of language was adopted. One of the common features was, however, the fact that the introductory sentences were often brief, even missing, so that the writer went to the point a bit more bluntly than in ordinary writing. Figure 7 summarises the four dimensions in e-mail communication.

The first dimension is concerned with the writing method, i.e., whether the message is written directly *on-line* with the aid of the telecommunications software and with little if any possibility of correcting one's mistakes, or *off-line* with the aid of a word-processor. This could also be called the *technical* dimension of e-mail communication. The second or *cognitive* dimension of *effort* moves from spontaneous, non-deliberate writing to more deliberate and conscious writing, which usually leads to stricter coherence and topical categorisation.

The third or *communicative* dimension concerns the *register of style*, i.e., the relationship between the reader and the recipient.

On-line writing emulates oral communication, tending to become more casual and informal than off-line writing, which, while resembling ordinary written communication, often, but not necessarily always, is more business-like and formal. The fourth (*thematic*) dimension in Figure 7 deals with *topic choice*, i.e., some topics lend themselves to a more casual style and a more spontaneous way of discussion. Weather, for instance, is usually regarded as a "light" topic, some kind of small talk, which does not necessitate advance deliberation or formal discussion. Poetry and accurate descriptions, among other things, benefit from more deliberation gained through the employment of off-line procedures.

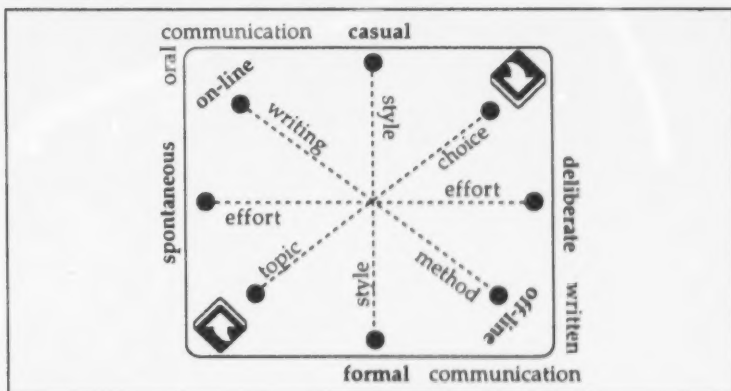


Figure 7. The four dimensions of e-mail communication.

Figure 7 could still be complemented with the modes of writing, i.e., with the overall or particular purposes of writing (poetic, expressive, phatic, informative, factual, etc.), but these do not form a dimension; rather, they cover the whole area of e-mail communication and lend themselves to various uses more indiscriminately.

Sometimes, surprisingly perhaps, the way of starting in *medias res*, produced stylistically straightforward and sound sentences, resulting in a crisp, documentary style. The following description has no introduction, no epilogue (the middle of the letter has been left out).

"To: YSO007 (10001:YSO007)

From: Teacher A Delivered: Fri 9-Mar-90 11:55 Sys 12762 (65) (...)

Mount Levi is located in northern Finland, near the Swedish border. (...) Or if you don't want to hurt animals, you can for example just take pictures of them."

A way to approach the question of the levels of formality or language register is to observe how native speakers of English formulated their thoughts on Campus 2000 noticeboards and in other e-mails addressed to Finnish participants:

"To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2
From: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850) Delivered: Sat 14-Apr-90 14:58 Sys 12762 ()
Subject: COMMS (...)

1:1) Nigel Palmer 11/14/89 13:03

I had a message from a school on Durham the other day requesting some details of the Pollution project. Sounds good, Nigel

1:2) David Jones 1/17/90 18:34

I am interested in using Comms with deaf students here at Bournville FE college. Are there any other interest groups you can suggest? I am prepared to set the ball rolling if needs be.

1:3) Tony Leigh 1/17/90 22:22

The obvious group would seem the CHATBACK people—I think their suffix is CHK on enquire—sorry I mean code I'm thinking of DOS!

1:4) Ros Keep 1/22/90 14:24

Yes David, Tony's right. Tom Holloway is your man, he's the Director of Chatback, which is a group of young people with a variety of speech dysfunctions. You can get Tom on 01:CLK001 (nearly right, /Tjiony!). The other person who may [_be ~r~rstill doing something is Brian Robinson in Cleveland. He's on YLV004 (I think!). Good luck, and let us know how you get on!

1:5) Tony Leigh 1/22/90 21:35

Really it's a prefix not a suffix so I was even less right than I would have been if I wasn't so wrong! Mark you Ros your speech dysfunctions is almost Freudian!

1:6) Ros Keep 1/24/90 9:12

(Can I blame line noise? I usually do...)

1:7) Christopher Woodhouse 3/15/90 14:46

Anyone out there please suggest some ideas for this project of mine? program is to be for all IBM compatibles, and all replies should reach me by 22nd of March 1990. The project, is a Mailing system for local

area networks. It will include a conferencing system, and personal mail retrieval. Please help!!!!

1:8) Tony Leigh 3/16/90 16:52

Can you re-enter this last with a bit of clarification?

Item 4 2/13/90 21:58 Jim Crawley

MINITEL CONTACT WITH FRANCE

I WILL RECEIVE A BETA COPY OF SOFTWARE WHICH WILL ENABLE ME TO CONTACT MY MINITEL IN FRANCE. I CAN THEN CONTACT FRENCH SCHOOLS TO ASK FOR PEN-FRIENDS. THEY SEND MESSAGES POSTE RESTANTE TO MINITEL. I ACCESS THE REMOTELY, SEND TO SCHOOL IN ENGLAND. ENTER RESPONSE

5 Discussion responses

4:1) Ros Keep 2/14/90 18:28

Jim, when you contact Minitel, do you have to phone direct to France? If so, have you any info about cost? Not so much for the one-off message, but what do you think it would cost for, say, a project lasting half a term with 2 communications per week? Or is that not feasible? Have you had any runaway success stories? Sorry for all the questions, but international links but so many people are interested in international links, and France has always been one of the problems

4:2) Tony Leigh 2/14/90 22:27

Your final comment is very true, Ros. It would be very helpful to gather the latest on contact with France either here or in a future Communiqué. For a number of people the language link makes the most sense when looking for international links. Spain is another problem. We have had a link with a NY school where the language of communication has been Spanish but who else speaks French? Canadian links appear to be very much in English speaking areas and anyway I'm told French Canadian is even written differently (?).

4:3) Ros Keep 2/20/90 15:30

Mmmm, I have yet to hear of a truly successful email link with France. There are a few one-offs which have worked, but sustained links seem to be difficult as the French teaching style is so different and the teachers have less autonomy. The Berks/Hants/IOW project (under the MESU banner) have been trying to get an electronic link with some schools' established exchange schools, and still no joy. The schools either don't have the right hardware, don't have access to a direct telephone or the 2 Heads (admin and curriculum) can't agree. A couple of the schools have been using FAX. Looks like the best bet is to get the French schools to join Campus. Anyone got any ideas of cost for them? (Bit garbled all this—hope you can make it out!)

4:4) Ros Keep 2/20/90 15:43

(By the way, as the NCET comms project comes to an end this Summer, there are only two issues left to produce so unfortunately I won't

be able to do a 'French special'. But I bet David Marshall would do it in Campus Forum...)

4:5) Tony Leigh

2/20/90 15:57

Your comments on French links bear out my own experiences / impressions. It seems the problems with the Chunnel might be more deep-rooted!!!! I had hoped someone had cracked this particular nut but clearly it is still defying everyone. (...)"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Mon 30-Apr-90 10:52 Sys 10001 (6)

Subject: Reply to: Quick replies!

I was in a great rush on Friday as my boat was craned in at 6am on Saturday and as is the nature of messing about in boats I was not ready! Now, of course, it is back to earth with the needs of earning my daily bread! If you express a letter/reply it bleeps if I am on line and flashes a message on my screen—can be useful when it is not possible to list users. Thanks for other offerings—will attend to later in the day. - Tony"

When e-mails of this kind, written by native speakers of English, are analysed, attention is easily drawn to several things. Possible mistakes, for instance, are often corrected as in spoken communication ("CHATBACK people—I think their suffix is CHK on enquire—sorry I mean code I'm thinking of DOS!"). There are lots of unchecked statements ("He's on YLV004 [I think!]"), long strings of rather unanalysed moves ("Really it's a prefix not a suffix so I was even less right than I would have been if I wasn't so wrong!"), and various ways of coping with garbled text brought about by line noise ("Bit garbled all this—hope you can make it out!"). First names are frequently used as in spoken situations ("Your final comment is very true, Ros."). This last comment mainly characterises the whole exchange of opinions, views, and stand-points. The whole noticeboard closely resembles a spoken conversation or *polylogue*, which can be concluded to be a typical feature of natural computer-mediated communication. It could equally be questioned, by and large, whether coherent logical text is absolutely relevant in network communications. This issue is also related to the question of communicative proficiency (cf. Tella 1991, 6) or pragmatic proficiency (Bardovi-Harlig & al. 1991).

It is essential to tell "genuine" e-mail communication apart from e-mails which transmit earlier produced writings, aiming, say, at higher literary or stylistic effects (cf. examples presented earlier in connection with students' descriptions of their home towns or home countries). It is equally important to notice that both

kinds of communication can coexist on international communications networks, as they naturally help transmitting diverse materials of various levels of elaboration. In this chapter, however, the main focus is laid on personal-level communication, on exchanges of experiences, feelings, ideas, suggestions, and how all these are tied in e-mails linguistically.

Another general comment: native speakers of English used elliptical language a lot, much more than Finnish teachers or students. Leaving out the personal pronoun (as a subject) or possessive pronouns (referring to the subject) or some auxiliary (like 'will') formed one of the most tangible features of ellipsis.

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: HAZELDOWN (YMB140) Delivered: Mon 14-May-90 13:28
Sys 10001 (1)
Subject: Reply to: Back to Biz

Will reply later."

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Mon 19-Mar-90 10:49 Sys
10001 (4)
Subject: Reply to: Good Networking!!

Looks interesting, Seppo, will look more closely this evening. You're welcome to use any mail.ref of mine that helps. Will send you a revision which allows one to add a new mail.ref without re-writinf the whole file.

- - Tomy"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Tue 6-Feb-90 11:02 Sys
10001 (6) (...)

[Teacher C1] it shall be! My apologies to [Teacher C1]—I had a feeling my guess would not be quite right. Interested to hear of system 01: link as this will enable [Teachers C1 and C2] to use CAUCUS. Apologies for delay in getting started to all of you—when I can take a breath my excuses will be made (grovelling) - - Tony"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: YSC007 Delivered: Mon 23-Apr-90 18:42 Sys 10001 (5)
Subject: Reply to: Back to Biz

Likewise have returned today and your message seems a great idea
So why not
Longer message soon
cheers Paul"

"From: THE.ADVISORY.UNIT (CBL001) Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90
15:59 Sys 107
To: TEACHER C1
Subject: Reply to: Test

Do not have a Finnish—English dictionary to hand. Please translate.
Mike Aston

"From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Sun 3-
June-90 21:40 Sys 10001
To: Teacher C2

Later we have sessions on satellite remote sensing, advanced network
communications and desktop publishing techniques. Going to be
busy. (...)"

The reply sent by Mr Brown's assistant resembled telex style:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 25-Apr-90 18:37 Sys 10001 (1)
Subject: Reply to: Back to Biz

Sorry George not present to answer, answer soon."

The next extract from Ros Keep combines several features of informal use of language, i.e. ellipses, fragmentary chains of words, repetition, overused punctuation (use of exclamation marks), double "etc's", and even a giggle at the beginning of the message:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: YLS023 Delivered: Mon 12-Feb-90 11:16 Sys 10001 (5)
Subject: Reply to: Testing Tony,s MAILREF-list

Tee hee! Like it, like it.....! Haven't amended my mail.ref file yet but
when i do I'll come in and play.....xD! (oops! So many exclamations,
repetition etc etc)
Ros"

My questionnaire to the Finnish teachers (May 1990) included a question (No 13) about the structure of the incoming messages (cf. Tella 1991, 166): "When you think of the structure of the messages (letters, for instance) you sent or received via e-mail, did you notice any differences between them and ordinary letters (in formality, in the ways to start and finish the message; in the way to handle the subject matter, etc.)?" The answers of all four teachers pointed to the same direction: informality. Teacher A, for instance, simply

stated that the style and structure were very informal (Teacher A, questionnaire, May 1990). Teacher B remarked that apart from textbook examples he had not had too much experience from personal letter writing in English, but he supposed the tone and also the layout were more informal in the e-mails (Teacher B, questionnaire, May 1990). In Teacher C1's opinion, after the initial phase, the style became quite informal, maybe faster than in ordinary lessons (Teacher C1, questionnaire, May 1990). Teacher C2 agreed that e-mail messages were more informal. She believed she had learnt from other e-mail users' example that the normal requirements of letter writing did not apply in e-mail communication (Teacher C2, questionnaire, May 1990).

The Finnish teachers can be argued to have developed a more elliptical style in the process of the fieldwork period, obviously emulating the native speakers to some extent, and thus gaining more pragmatic or sociolinguistic proficiency as well. When growing more accustomed to using e-mail, the Finnish teachers slightly tended to shorten their messages in the way native speakers did. This did not happen to everybody, however. Teacher C2, for instance, continued to write her fluent prose style till the end, without letting the style of incoming e-mails to affect her own despite what she said in the questionnaire (May 1990). On the other hand, her partner school teacher, Mr Milford, also wrote rather non-committally and reservedly. It is impossible to conclude whether Teacher C2 affected Mr Milford so that he never changed his style, or whether his style was regarded by Teacher C2 as appropriate and natural to reflect back. As Teacher C2's e-mail links represented a rather low communication proximity, she did not have many other examples to react to personally. One could argue that in this sense Teacher C2 did not use the computer as a proper communicative tool in e-mail communication in order to enhance her own pragmatic proficiency. Teachers A and C1 used a somewhat more informal register in comparison with Teachers B and C2, but they also succeeded in establishing high communication proximity links with quite a few foreign participants. Teacher B's way of writing was fairly reflective, letting lighter tones to intermix with serious thinking only occasionally. He did master a more casual style, and used it in his e-mails addressed to my e-mailbox, for instance. As to my own e-mail style, it was greatly affected by native speakers' examples, but it was partly because I was perhaps more conscious of the issue of style than the rest of the Finnish teachers, among whom the question was not raised during the fieldwork period.

7.2.3. Greetings and Closings

In this chapter, a number of further observations will be made concerning e-mail formats. They will be discussed from the viewpoint of how initial greetings and end greetings (closings) differ from those in traditional letters. FL teaching in senior secondary schools usually covers different kinds of letters, from official business-like letters and letters to the Editor to more casual, informal letters, including the "bread-and-butter" letters. Writing postcards is also practised, although this kind of activity is more usual at the comprehensive school level.

In addition to quite ordinary greetings ("Dear Tim, — Best wishes..."; "Dear Mr Lawrence, — Sincerely yours...", etc.), there was a large collection of more personalised ways of starting and ending one's e-mails. Obviously, this was due to the more informal character of the e-mails, which facilitated letter writing in many ways. As e-mails were sometimes intended for a number of addressees, the initial greetings could vary considerably, although in normal correspondence, these kinds of greetings would certainly appear rather infrequently, at least "Dear world".

"From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Wed 9-May-90 20:51 Sys 10001 (95)
Subject: open conferences using CAUCUS

Hi Everyone,
CAUCUS version 2 is at last up and running. Unfortunately, for copy-right (...)"

"From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Wed 20-June-90 23:47 Sys 10001 (41)
Subject: Conference item/PS26

Hi folks! The Caucus conferencing system needs an original burst to stir (...)"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
To: Teacher B
From: SCHOOLS.IT.UNIT (YOJ002) Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 14:51 Sys 10001)
Subject: Message and files from England

Dear Both!
Apologies for the delay in responding, but life has been excitingly hectic! (...)"

"Subject: family trees
From: YMA013 Posted: Mon 26-Mar-90 13:28 Sys 1

dear world
I am A English doy with an American perant and Norweigen and
Polish g (...)"

The following e-mail shows that the writer did not quite know whom his letter was addressed to:

"From: YLB053 Posted: Wed 14-Mar-90 17:31 Sys 1

Dear Whoever,
My name is Jake Johnson. (...)"

As could be seen from above, also native speakers used an exclamation mark after the initial greeting, not frequently encountered in ordinary written correspondence. This is probably explained by the oral language quality felt by the writer.

As regards the end greetings (or closings), the spectrum was and highly personal. In many cases, it was rather simplified in that the felicitous letter writing closings, often consisting of two or even three different phases (prefinal phrases, e.g., "Looking forward to ...", and final phrases, e.g., "Sincerely yours..."), were quite frequently reduced to one closing phrase only.

"From: LDBHS (NYE018) Delivered: Thu 10-May-90 17:56 Sys 134
To: Teacher A
Subject: stories from Brandeis

Hi, my name is David Lu (...)

Fondly,
David Lu"

"To: NYE001 (134:NYE001)
From: Teacher A Delivered: Tue 8-May-90 14:41 Sys 12762 ()
Subject: Hi from (...)

May your lifes be full of happiness!
O(...), M(...) & J(...)"

In the following e-mail, the writer closes her letter with two different phrases. The prefinal closing consists of a short thank-you note, while the final closing is rather elliptical, perhaps voluntarily or

simply due to some technical hitch which has deleted the last word before the writer's name. Besides, the initial greeting ("Dear + first name + name) and the closing (phrase + first name) are slightly out of balance.

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: S.GERSH (NYE001) Delivered: Thu 19-Apr-90 2:29 Sys 134 (7)
Subject: Reply to: Back to Biz

Ödear Seppo Tella, (...)

Thanks so much.
Best
Sheila"

In the next e-mail, the closing phrase could appear rather infelicitous from the viewpoint of traditional letter writing, but it works well in this context:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 13:16 Sys 12762 (1)
Subject: From Finland to Mr Brown (...)

Youth and money

Here in Finland we have a high price level. (...)
Most of money is spent on clothes, movies, eating and so on.
Those usual things.
M(...) and S(...)"

"To: Teacher C2
To: CHRIS.DAVISON (YDO001)
From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Wed 10-Jan-90 16:54 Sys
Subject: Hello from St. Vincent students

Hello, my our names are Simon and Phil, (...)
What would you like to talk to us about?

Chat again soon

Simon and Phil"

In the next e-mail, Phil from Britain addresses himself to four Finnish girls. Perhaps feeling that "Lots of love" is not felicitous enough, he adds something else, trying to give the greeting a touch of lightness, conversational input, and humour as well.

"To: TBX631 (12762:TBX631)
From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Tue 30-Jan-90 14:35 Sys)
Subject: Letter from Philip

Dear H(...), T(...), E(...) and I(...),
(...)
Lots of love (and whatever else) Phil."

Another way, quite common in fact, was to start with the name of the recipient and end with the sender's name, without using any adequate initial or closing greetings. This kind of brief style *could* be felt to be slightly impolite if it were used at the beginning of an exchange before proper links and *rapport* had been established. In Mr Tony Leigh's phraseology, I assume it was simply a mannerism born from frequent writings on the CAUCUS noticeboards where succinct style was clearly appreciated:

"From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Thu 26-Apr-90 22:33 BST
Sys 10001
Subject: Reply to: News & Requests
Seppo - -
It is interesting to see you raise the relationship of word processor and paper. (...) Caucus V2 should be launched on May 1st and will have several public conferences which I'm sure will interest people.
- - Tony"

The following message illustrates one of the styles to finish off one's message in mock haste, so that the closing is part of the last sentence. This stylistic device allows one to be brief without appearing rude.

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: YSO007 Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 19:52 Sys 10001 (11)
Subject: back again!

Dear Seppo
Many many apologies for our silence. We seemed to have been hit by storm after storm. (...) Our entire lower school computers have been wiped out as fuses and chips blew, the same happened to disk drives. Then in the main school where I mainly work it was the overnight rain pouring o. now the computer is flashing and beeping so will send this now best wishes Paul"

The reason why these new kinds of initial and final greetings are of importance to FL teaching lies in the argument that e-mail communication differs from ordinary written communication in that

closings, often thought of as culture-specific (cf. e.g., Bardovi-Harlig & al. 1991), tend to break out of conventional bonds. This may be true, of course, in personal-level correspondence with pen and paper as well. What counts is that in e-mail communication this habit tends to get generalised even between people who do not yet know each other too well.

The considerations above are also connected to the question of presenting factual vs. phatic information. The requirements of an adequately polite use of language call for a sufficient amount of phatic use of language as well. 'Phatic' is understood to contain various contact establishing and supporting uses of language, which consequently should not be disregarded if rules of proper social interaction are paid enough heed to (cf. e.g., Ingesman 1990). Phatic language does not in fact convey any factual information but it helps to open up the communication channel and to keep it open. In this way, phatic use of language also helps to make the communication situation more social. Phatic language can consist of anything from greetings or short talks about the weather to non-verbal language like nodding, smiling or simple eye-to-eye contact (Ingesman 1990). In computer-mediated communication phatic language is mainly expressed with the aid of short greetings and observations but also with ways of compensating the lack of non-verbal communication (to be dealt later in this report). If an e-mail is a letter, then initial greetings and closings are evidently forms of phatic language. The fact that computer-mediated communication and e-mail in particular are sometimes felt to be too blunt or even rude (cf. e.g., Sproull & Kiesler 1991, 87; Tella 1991, 30) is partly explained by lack of enough phatic use of language. The purely factual level, i.e., just exchanging information, may jeopardise the effort of establishing social contacts between the communicators. In this sense, some of the e-mails presented above could be criticised for not having enough phatic utterances in order to uphold friendly, personal, or social ties between the sender and the recipient.

From this point of view, it obviously was a good idea not to reduce the outgoing messages into simple informational skeletons; rather, it seemed wise to always add some personal greetings, remarks or observations in one's e-mails. By acting this way, the role of the computer could enhance the personal element instead of just serving as a communicative medium. This seemed to be better understood by the Finnish teachers than by the students. A good example occurred in Teacher C1's class at the beginning of the field-work period. Exceptionally, Teacher C2's group was also present. It was up to Teacher C1 to write a short "Thank you" message back

to England. When typing it on-line, Teacher C1 hesitated a bit about how to word his note. Teacher C2 at once suggested to Teacher C1 that he should write something like "[Thank you for your] most interesting letters—[we were] most delighted". Three girls of Teacher C1's group, clearly not very satisfied with the messages received from abroad, immediately protested by asking whether that was the way how they were taught to tell lies at school! Teacher C2's surprised comment followed at once: "No, no—this is normal Anglo-Saxon politeness we should follow." In fact, what Teacher C2 tried to do was to use phatic language according to the conventional letter writing traditions. The criticism shown by the three girls, however, revealed positive things of the teacher-student relationships: students were obviously accustomed to and allowed to express themselves, even when their opinions did not match those of a visiting teacher. In the beginning the girls in question had rather negative attitudes towards writing or reading student profiles, but they completely changed their minds once they had browsed through the first incoming messages. On the other hand, Teacher C2's students, also present in the same situation, did not show any of this criticism towards the letters received from Britain. This is the message sent by Teacher C1 after the above episode:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 15-Jan-90 9:24 Sys 12762 (6)

Subject: Reply to: First communications to [Teacher C1]

Dear George,

Thank you very much for your most interesting letter. We have also read your students' profiles and we will be delighted to answer them in the very near future.

Best wishes, [Teacher C1]"

Teacher C1's on-line reply to Mr Brown also met another requirement connected to the use of phatic language. In e-mail communication it was felt important to get some kind of confirmation of the reception of one's message. A good policy, and in harmony with phatic language requirements, was to send a short notice of reception as soon as one had read the incoming message, even if a longer answer was written later on. In this sense, the above e-mail is a good example of how the established link was upheld.

7.2.4. Expressing Non-Verbal Language

Given that e-mail communication has so far been text-based¹, non-verbal communication in its ordinary sense cannot be used. Non-verbal communication is usually divided into three components: (i) *paralinguistic communication*, e.g., variations in voice loudness; intonation; tempo, pitch, and quality of voice; (ii) *extralinguistic or kinesic communication*, e.g., gestures; facial expressions; posture; appearance; touching; nodding; eye movement; eye contact; proxemics or space to interlocutor; and (iii) *artifacts*, e.g., clothing; insignia; jewellery (cf. e.g., Argyle 1988; Buzan 1989; Robertson 1989; Tella 1991, 30–31). Various ways of compensating the lack of support of non-verbal communication have been suggested. McCreary & Van Duren (1987, 114), for instance, recommend "indicating affect in parentheses (groan) (sigh) (chuckle!)." Robinson (1990, 38) argues for block capitals as equivalents to shouting. The sender of an e-mail can also have recourse to *mail icons*, so as to show the mood in which the message was written or to add some extra tones (irony, sarcasm, etc.) to the words used.

Assuming that mail icons would be unfamiliar concepts to the Finnish participating teachers, I informed them of 26 different mail icons I was aware of as part of my first letter (January 7th, 1990) to all four of them at the beginning of the fieldwork period (*Appendix O*). In the same letter I sent them part of my text on how to compensate the lack of non-verbal communication in e-mails. Teacher C1 was the only one to react to these icons:

"To: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Thu 18-Jan-90 18:50 Sys 12762 (1)
Subject: Reply to: Mail Icons

Hi Seppo,
Amusing signs
????????? (I didn't learn the icons yet), [Teacher C1]"

None of the four Finnish teachers *ever* used any of the mail icons in their own e-mails. Apparently, they did not see any practical impor-

¹ In the course of time, the use of voice-based and graphic-based electronic mail will be generalised (cf. e.g., Olson & Atkins 1990; Rice & Shook 1990). Through this kind of advanced e-mail, graphics, animation, self-contained computer programs as well as audio and video recordings will be transmitted, broadening considerably the applications for networked communications (Sproull & Kiesler 1991). During the fieldwork period of this research, these new resources of e-mail were not yet available.

tance in using them. As to the foreign participants, a few used at least one of these icons regularly, i.e., the first one (:-), standing for 'smiling'.

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: LEN.SHEPHERD. (LSP001) Delivered: Mon 12-Feb-90 10:27
Sys 2020)
Subject: Reply to: Hello from Helsinki (...)

This is an excellent project that I would like to be involved in. Please partner me up with a school. (...)
Bill :-)"

Another regular user of mail icons was Mr Thorir Jonsson from Iceland, e.g.,

"#11 16-FEB-1990 03:24:13.52 NEWMAIL (...)
This day was (and still is) Husband Day. This day the wife is supposed to take extra good care of her husband :-) and, the husband was supposed to get outside, having nothing on but one leg in his long underpants, and walk three times around the house! (Of course this was in the country, 'farmer-culture'. Could you really imagine every husband in Toronto and Helsinki hopping naked around his house early in the morning, with one leg in long underpants? Please try :-) !! (...)"

By and large, the use of mail icons was infrequent during the field-work period within the schools to be studied. At the same time, I browsed other conferences and e-mail systems, which abounded with these icons. I feel tempted to conclude that the use of mail icons is directly connected to the competence of using computer-mediated communication and computers in general; the more experienced the user is, the more he seems to use mail icons and other means of conveying non-verbal communication.

There were, however, other ways of expressing something unwritable. Capital letters and exclamation marks were frequently used and overused, by both foreigners and Finns, in order to enhance some words or expressions. Oral utterances and exclamations were expressed with onomatopoeic words ("Da-da-daa!", "Mmmm", "Ha-ha", "Whooops").

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 14-May-90 20:29 Sys 12762 (5)
Subject: A student letter from finland (...)

Are you REALLY interested in traditional Finnish foodrecipes? (...)
Oh no, its the first of April. (...) But...

... there IS something great in this years April.
Da-da-daa! I am going to be eighteen at 24th. (...)
LOVE Suzie XXX"

"To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2
From: TELLA.SEPP0 (TBX850) Delivered: Sat 14-Apr-90 14:58 Sys
12762 ()
Subject: COMMS (...)
4:3) Ros Keep 2/20/90 15:30
Mmmm, I have yet to hear of a truly successful email link with
France. There are a few one-offs which have worked, but sustained
links seem to be (...)"

"To: TELLA.SEPP0 (TBX850)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Mon 21-May-90 12:30 Sys 12762 (429)

3:2) Holywells High School 16-MAY-90 12:08
Hi Mervyn! We meet again. All potential & no realisation! Oh well,
we'll keep watching this s....whooops...space. (...)"

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015
To: School C
Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

TWO DAYS IN THE LIFE OF CARMEN by Carmen Kinder (17)
February, 8th 1990 (Thursday)
I woke up at 6 o'clock but I stayed in bed until 7. It was raining cats
and dogs when I left the house so it didn't take long until I was com-
pletely wet. I didn't return because I didn't want to miss the mats les-
son because of my good marks, HA, HA, HA. In the arts lesson my
teacher said he did not want to see me in such wet clothes, so I had to
go home and take a hot bath. After that I visited my parents who were
just having visitors from the GDR. My visit took only 20 minutes so I
didn't talk much to the citizens of the GDR. (...)"

"Fo: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Fri 27-Apr-90 10:56 Sys
10001 (48)
Subject: The following mail item is undeliverable to:

Whoops! Slight glitch in r all but will get to work on it! - Tony"

"To: Teacher C1
Cc: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335) (...)

Hi Suzie,
How are you ? I,m in a very wacky mood today so beware. My totally
mad friend Joe is sitting next to me being very silly (as usual)!!!! I've

got a joke to tell you :- Why did the monkey fall out of the tree ?
 Answer :- Because it was dead!! ha ha ha! Sorry about that I will be serious now (...)

You also said that we have very different ways of dancing. What's that supposed to mean ? !!!!

Anyway, I'll have to go now as it is nearly lunch time and I'm hungry (nothing unusual!!!!). I look forward to your next letter.

Lots of love,
 Clare. xxxxxxxxxxxx (...)

(...) friends they are all great but there are two species, Karen and Viki, who are totally MAD but are great to be with. (...)"

"To: TELLASEPPO (TBX850)
 From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Tue 20-Mar-90 14:13 Sys 12762 (341)
 Subject: Finnish Newsletter (...)

Sorry we have to stop our stories now because the lesson is going to end soon and then we both have a test in German (we haven't read too much for it????). We hope that the text wasn't too boring. The bell rings so....

.....BYE, BYE!!!!!!!!!!!!!! (...)"

"To: YDO076 (10001:YDO076)
 From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Mon 22-Jan-90 12:25 Sys 12762 (8)
 Subject: answers to Simon and Phil (...)

Our hobbies are both downhill and crosscountry skiing, playing tennis, dancing (even LAMBADA !!!), riding, jogging, aerobics, reading. We both read a lot of historical books; our favourite writer is Jane Austen, though also Science Fiction books are interesting. (...)"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
 From: YSO007 Delivered: Tue 5-Dec-89 19:13 Sys 10001 (15)
 Subject: Itsenaisy ys paiva (...)

We have just discovered it is your independence day.
 So HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!!!!!! (...)"

Parentheses were used in two meanings: first, as in normal style, in order to add something, a secondary thought, etc. Second, it was used to insert a sort of excuse, which in oral communication would have been said with a different intonation. For instance:

"To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2
From: TELLA.SEPPPO (TBX850) Delivered: Sat 14-Apr-90 14:58 Sys
12762 ()
Subject: COMMS (...)
4:3) Ros Keep 2/20/90 15:30
(...) A couple of the schools have been using FAX. Looks like the best
bet is to get the French schools to join Campus. Anyone got any ideas
of cost for them? (Bit garbled all this—hope you can make it out!) (...)"

All in all, a number of ways were used to point out some words, much to the same effect as one would have done through non-verbal communication in face-to-face contacts. The range of ways was not very wide; most of the writers seemed to content themselves with practices of the same kind. What was important to notice was that none of the participants commented on the lack of non-verbal communication at all. The ways available appeared to suffice. On the other hand, as the same ways were used by both adults and students, this can also be interpreted to imply that e-mail communication is somewhat limited concerning the variety of methods of modifying and personalising one's messages.

7.2.5. Humour?

Humour is difficult to define as it contains high levels of personal interpretation and is deeply situation-specific. Humour can be regarded as one of those elements which, if correctly and humanely used, can unite teachers and students. It also reflects the whole atmosphere in the classroom. If no humour is found, no laughter comes across, the class atmosphere is likely to become forced and unnatural. Research on humour in connection with FL education is rare; on the whole, not much is written about this topic in general. Cazden (1986, 444) argues that, considering the paucity of references to humour in research on classroom talk, either classes are deadpan places and absence of humour one mark of the teaching register, or that researchers consider humour irrelevant (cf. also Gorham & Christophel 1990).

In this report, the concept 'humour' is used to refer to two larger categories: first, to jokes and anecdotes, jokingly used expressions or jocularities either by the teacher or by the students, and to puns or plays-on-words used by either parties, used in e-mail communication; second, to any humorous use of language, e.g., humorous instructions in classroom situations. Sometimes the students' style of writing is obviously an effort to use "teenage" hu-

mour. As a comparison, Bryant & al. (1980; cited in Gorham & Christophel 1990, 48) divide the use of humour into six categories: joke, riddle, pun, funny story, humorous comment, and "other", which included broad visual/vocal comedy. Their classification, meant to be used in classroom observations only, is partly overlapping with categories of this report, but it also includes categories (visual/vocal comedy, for example) not to be considered relevant in this study. The viewpoint adopted or measure of humour use was my own analysis of e-mail communication and perceptions of classroom observations, which, naturally, contains a large amount of subjective interpretation. This can be defended, however, for several reasons. First, I managed to establish a good working rapport between the participating teachers and their students, which probably made it easier for me to realise when humour was used or meant to be understood. Second, despite subjective assessment, the beneficial use of humour in teaching has been reported over and over again (cf. e.g., Gorham & Christophel 1990), which made it an important aspect to observe. Besides, the use of humour may—partly at least—compensate for the missing support of non-verbal communication.

A sign of good atmosphere is when students tolerate—positively—their teacher's mild jokes about themselves, without taking them for the teacher's attempts to ingratiate himself. When some of the notices on Campus noticeboards were browsed in Teacher C1's class, he remarked that rather obscene language ("fucking", etc.) was occasionally used on them, but according to Teacher C1, that would only shock us (him and me), not the students. When one particularly strongly worded notice was read, Teacher C1 jokingly said that this notice reminded him of the letters of some of his students (a few names were mentioned)—a little hilarity among the students was observed.

A few girls of his sent a message to Barney, and added 63 empty lines after their names. When read on the screen, this message naturally caused some anxiety concerning what was happening as the screen became blank for several screenfuls.

To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Wed 14-Feb-90 12:08 Sys 12762 (9)

Subject: A student letter to Mr Brown (...)

Dear Barney,

Thanks for your (and Karen's and Vicki's) letter. (...)

Hope to hear from you soon.

Love,

Love,

P(...)

T(...)

[63 empty lines deleted from here]
Hey, what did the girls do????
Best wishes [Teacher C1]"

Humour can be understood to include riddles as well. When Teacher A sent her first letters to Mr Mundt, with a long list of the names of her students, I suggested to Mr Mundt that his students try to guess which of the students were girls and which were boys.

As part of my letters to the Finnish teachers, I included some language games and riddles, which I meant either to amuse the teachers exclusively or to be used with the students whenever the teachers thought it appropriate. The "Test Your Senses" series consisted of 24 pictograms to be expressed in English. I also forwarded to them some rules of thumb I had come across earlier (New York Times Magazine, Nov. 4th, 1979). The main idea was to raise their level of linguistic awareness, which would reflect on their e-mail work as well. (*Appendix P*)

In the fieldnotes, I frequently commented on how some small incidents caused either laughter and giggling or at least smiling in the participating classes. Some were due to technical clumsiness most of the teachers suffered from in the beginning, e.g., text rolling off the screen too quickly to be read by the students. When Teacher C1 handed out the copies of the German newsletter to his students, the number of pages (nine altogether) was considered too large, which was jokingly commented on by the students, mainly between themselves.

In a few cases, a student told a joke in his e-mail.

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)
Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

(...) I've got a joke to tell you :- Why did the monkey fall out of the tree ? Answer :- Because it was dead!! ha ha ha! Sorry about that I will be serious now (...)"

Carol, an English student, referred to adult, sexually attuned humour she had met during her work practice (cf. Chapter 7.1.10). The students often made jokes between themselves. In School A, for instance, when the students were made to write about TV programmes, a group of three boys asked me for some lexical help.

¹ Answers: 2 man overboard; 3 I understand; 4 reading between the lines; 5 long underwear.

They joked all the time between themselves, e.g. about Moscow TV being the most important for them. Lighter tones, in general, were evidenced in the student profiles, but, surprisingly perhaps, also in Letters to Mr Gorbachev, in which the students relied on joke-cracking instead of posing serious questions. Part of the students' humour was also the imaginative use of language, by coining rather incomprehensible rhymes, for instance:

"To: YLP059 (10001:YLP059)
From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 11:57 Sys 12762 (1)
Subject: More answers to George (...)

P.S. By the way Iém sorry but I donét know English names so well,so are you a boy or a girl?

P.P.S. Sari has hurt her hand,so Mia had a pleasure to write this letter on computer.

Pump up the jam!
Pump it up
Yo pump it up
While your feet are stompin'
And the jam is pumpin' ... Auaa! (...)

Hi Karen! (...)
We're all boys, P(...) and P(...) are 17 and T(...) is 18. T(...) just arrived from Sweden. He went to the ship's disco and breakdanced on his head, making a strong impression on the audience. He is a sensitive, loving and caring person and would like to get to know you a little more closely. (...) You're welcome to his nightmare. (...)"

Teacher's remark:
(...) I think the boys only want to be very funny. Of course it is possible to leave all this kind of 'teenage humour' (?) out. (...)"

A mixed dialogue in the following e-mail may well express one kind of student humour. Two girls are intercepting Barney's writing with their comments. Barney's words are reproduced in plain text; Karen's are *in italics*, and Vicki's in **boldface**.

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 7-Feb-90 19:17 Sys 10001 (335)
Subject: Further letters from CPS students (...)

Hi T(...) & P(...)
Please could you send a description of each other. So I know what you look like. I do like girls but the girls at Chesham Park School are real nasty to me, and are always giving me a hard time especially Karen

Harrison, who is writing to P(...) P(...), P(...) K(...) and T(...) V(...). Karen has just read the letter and has just hit me. *Isn't that a shame, he deserved it.* That was just written by Karen. I think she is going to become a boxer. She has just hit me again. *Barney is lying, all the girls at Chesham Park love him lots.* By Vicki. Could you tell me more about where you live and your families.
Hope to hear from you soon.

Barney (...)"

In the next e-mail, the student writer utilises verbal humour, connected to numerals. The humorous effect is brought about by the repetition of the same number (14), which in fact is often made use of in oral communication:

"#1 15-MAY-1990 07:47:21.82 NEWMAIL
From: IN%"SCHWAEGERLÉvms.macc.wisc.edu" "MICHAEL
SCHWAEGERL"
To: TELLAEcc.Helsinki.FI
Subj: Letters from Wisconsin (...)

People who attend Memorial sporting events can't help but notice the Junior Varsity pom-pom squads.
Many girls tried out for the squads, but only a few made it. This year's squad consists of about fourteen members, but, on the average, a squad will have about fourteen members. (...)"

Foreign teachers sometimes cracked jokes, i.e. Mr Leigh upheld the tradition of the dry British sense of humour, adding a little social criticism in it, occasionally.

"From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Sun 11-Feb-90 17:15 Sys
10001 (42)
Subject: Response to Seppo's words (...)

UK Feast Days 1990 when businesses are closed. (...)

May 7 Bank Holiday (to call it Labour Day or celebrate on May 1 with present government is inviting deportation to South Georgia or at best a sentence trying to scrub the glow off the rocks in the Irish Sea). (...)"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Mon 12-Feb-90 10:57 Sys
10001 (9)
Subject: Reply to: Reply to: Response to Seppo's words (...)

Just glanced at interesting article in today's times which seems to be claiming that our Victorian schools with outside toilets and chronic under-resourcing are being looked at by the well-funded, modern and

child orientated kindergartens and young people's schools in Denmark. One of our 'imaginative' education ministers is trying to explain how we are better off without books and equipment and that there is something character building about going to the toilet in the rain! (...) Mustr rush - Tony"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 0:22 Sys 10001 (2)
Subject: Reply to: Testing Tony,s GLOBAL mail.ref-list

I like these definitions. How about a network is a line with an infinite number of breaks?"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 0:25 Sys 10001 (5)
Subject: Reply to: Culture--on St. Valentine's

Culture is the green growth on the unwashed canteen floor! Will organise a response as soon as I catch up on the last letter!!! Seriously—it is delightful to be bombarded by so much from so many new contacts. - - Tony"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)
From: PS26 (NYE013) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 16:18 Sys 134 (10)
Subject: Reply to: Reply to: Response to Seppo's words

(...) We will also be sending you a list of our natiol holidays (woops, I gave one away).. I t is interesting to see what events are important in our countries. I don't think my responcees will be as witty as Tony's—they never are. It must be that British humor that we hear about it n the states!!
Regards, Terry"

"To: Teacher C1
From: YLP059 Delivered: Wed 20-June-90 12:13 Sys 10001 (66)
Subject: Request for assistance from George Brown (...)

I read something the other day which you might find amusing: what do you call someone who can speak three languages?—TRILINGUAL: what do you call someone who can speak two languages?—BILINGUAL: what do you call someone who can speak one language?—BRITISH! (...)"

Briefly, quite a number of instances were recorded concerning the use of humour during the fieldwork period. The open learning environment perhaps made it easier for the students to crack jokes be-

tween themselves, but also the teachers had not completely forgotten the role and meaning of humour. In many cases, humour was felt to be situation-specific; it arose from the common experience in the classroom and could not be generalised over that. The teachers made use of their knowledge of the students, and the students could obviously rely on their teachers to understand their own type of humour.

7.2.6. Regional Variants

The FL curriculum (Anon. 1985, 64) determines that the student should understand educated speech of both British English and American English. He should also have opportunities to listen to other spoken language variants as well as to become familiar with the most important regional variants. Although the FL curriculum (Anon. 1985) restricts its recommendations to pronunciation, it is logical to enlarge these aims to include written language as well. In this respect, the present network consisting of several English-language countries (Britain, the USA, Canada) offered ample opportunity to learn something more.

On Campus, for instance, a number of notices consisted of comparisons between words in various regional variants. The lists were compiled by local students in their respective countries, producing some teaching materials which felicitously complemented the students'—and perhaps also their teachers'—knowledge of these variants. The lists also included some special expressions favoured by the children in particular parts of the country. Some of the words used by Nuneaton children resembled the rhyming slang. (*Appendix Q*)

7.2.7. Lexis and Idioms

An activity that was of crucial importance to many lessons during the fieldwork period was the searching for and finding out some special words needed for the outgoing e-mails. As the students often worked in dyads or small groups over a theme they had chosen to write something about, they constantly met with words they did not know or could not find in any dictionary. Both the teachers and I myself helped them to look for these terms. This proved to be a demanding yet enriching experience. Even if this kind of activity is by no means uncommon in ordinary FL lessons if group work is

used, it seemed to be more motivating now that the messages were to be sent abroad, to be read by an authentic audience, perhaps by youngsters of a similar age. In the following, a few examples will be given of these kinds of linguistic situations.

In School A, on January 22nd, 1990, the students discussed a lot of interesting details together, e.g., how to translate *valaistu hiihtolatu* in English. Teacher A and I suggested translations like a 'lighted ski-track' or a 'ski-track well lit'. Independently, Teacher B had suggested to his students 'lit [walking paths and] skiing tracks'. True, the term is needed to describe a typical Finnish phenomenon. In fact, there was a term in Mr Milford's letter addressed to Teacher C2, which could probably be used to describe this kind of ski-track as well, viz. 'floodlit'.

"From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Wed 20-Dec-89 18:40 Sys1

To: Teacher C2Subject: Links (...)

Behind the new College buildings there is a full sports centre with a floodlit all-weather playing surface, a full size indoor sports hall, a 25m indoor swimming pool, a 25m rifle range, 3 indoor squash courts etc. (...)"

During the same lesson, a dyad of two boys were surprised to hear from me that the word "fell" (*tunturi*) would not necessarily be understood by the English, so they could also think of using the word "mountain".

One problem was to advise the students not to translate everything literally. For instance, two girls asked me what the English for *urheilun hyvin edustettuna* could be. I asked them to paraphrase the meaning of the sentence. Besides, the teachers often found it wise to provide some extra lexis for their students before they were to tackle an assignment:

"A phone call to Teacher A just after Dec. 6th, 1989:

Tanbridge also asked about Finnish soap opera—we wondered if there are any Finnish soap operas really. Pupils might know. It sounds relevant to let British students know that we have so and so many TV channels, sky channels etc. and therefore quite a few British or American soap operas can be watched on TV.

Teacher's role: she has provided pupils with glossaries of clothing etc. (*tiukat housut*, etc.) The product is up to the pupils but as they don't know enough vocabulary, the teacher has found it necessary to give them some. Sounds reasonable and necessary."

The fieldwork period also gave the teachers and me an opportunity to underline that literal translations of isolated words would usually not lead to a good translation. When the 'Never-ending story' was being written, quite a few words were asked, e.g., *kolo*. The teacher suggested a 'hole', I suggested a 'crack', the teacher again a 'split', and then we asked for a more precise context. One of the girls explained: *Lattiasta puuttui yksi lankku*. This changed our ideas and showed how students tended to ask for single terms, without any context. And yet the main thing was to see the whole sentence or idea in which the word would be inserted.

The incoming e-mails were utilised lexiswise as well. For instance, some lists were made of the adjectives the foreign students had used when describing themselves. On March 14th, Teacher B was going to have an essay written. For the essay, he had given the students a three-page handout which contained quite a lot of terminology included in the Tiffin Boys' School letters. He hoped this would encourage the students to study the lexis more carefully. Some of the incoming e-mails contained quite fresh and new vocabulary, also from the teacher's point of view. Quite often, these terms were explained to the students by the teachers, e.g., amalgamation; wacky; single sex school.

Difficulties arose when some special topic was being described, such as *pesäpallo* (the Finnish baseball). The students tried to find translations for terms like *sisävuoro* (inning) and *ulkovuoro* (field). The teacher had given them a large encyclopedia intended for language teachers. I suggested the boys could ask the British students what the opposite of 'inning' would be but they did not like the idea, for one reason or another. In School C, a group of girls used dictionaries frequently, as terms like *suolakurkku*, *punajuuri* and others were being looked for.

Three girls in School B started to describe the Finnish Matriculation Examination. Both the teacher and I were asked to give some lexis, e.g., *yleissivistävä* (first suggestion: 'general education'; another useful term would have been 'liberal education'), a very important term indeed. Other terms asked included words such as *pakollinen reaalikoe* (= liberal arts; we asked them to explain it in other words or give examples of disciplines included). Another question was asked: *Miten sanotaan 'korjata kokeet'?* I suggested 'read (or mark) the papers', but then noticed they had started the sentence with 'The exams are ...', so I put forward the verb 'check' or 'correct' as well.

One more question was put forward: *Mitä on 'arvioida'?* I suggested 'assess', which was used, but in fact the girls wanted to

say something like *Kokeet arvioidaan käyttämällä asteikkoa Laudatur...* The grades (L, M, CL, etc.) were not quite familiar to the girls (they first wrote *abropatur, for instance, but it was no wonder, as they had not studied Latin, and the Matriculation Examination was still a long way away. We worked together on how to explain these terms to the English, who might not know any of them. Incidentally, I had a chance of teaching them the English assessment system (A, B, C, etc.), in which A stands for excellent, or Laudatur, and F for Fail.

The foreign participants' letters contained a couple of examples of idioms the Finnish teachers found striking, e.g.,

"To: YDO076 (10001:YDO076)

From: Teacher C2 Delivered: Sun 25-Mar-90 11:05 Sys 12762 (26)

The bit about English mice having sweet teeth was most endearing. Don't they like cheese any more? (...)"

In School B, while writing about the misuse of alcohol, some girls asked us, *Mitä on 'juhlapäivä' englanniksi?* I first suggested they use 'festivity', then, aided by Teacher B, 'special days when we celebrate a lot'. Finally, as we could not find any particularly suitable equivalents, I suggested we ask foreign participants. This led to a letter (see below) I sent to the Global Village schools. The letter was meant to initiate a lexis geared exchange of ideas between the various schools.

"Helsinki, Feb. 11, 1990

Dear friends, (...)

A. Language Part

So to start with—may I put forward three words which we have found difficult to explain. Can you find an expression in English or in your respective mother tongue that would best describe the concept looked for? As I'll be sending this e-mail to quite a few friends all over the world, we will be keen to know equivalents in other languages as well, German, French, Swedish in particular, as these languages are studied in Finnish schools. (Not to forget Icelandic, of course!)

1) According to a dictionary, the English for the Finnish word 'juhlapäivä' (ä = a with two dots above it) seems to be either 'festival' or 'festival day' or 'national festivals' or 'church festivals' or, in religious parlance, 'festival day' or 'feast day'. One more translation is given: 'red-letter day'.

Quite a collection, isn't it? I wonder if all these terms are used in English-speaking countries. Are there any other terms widely used? Is a 'red-letter day' just a colloquialism? (printed in red in calendars) (...)

2) One of my colleagues, [Teacher B] from [name of town], had recently had a long discussion with his English-speaking visitors on how to translate the Finnish word 'puistotäti' into English. A rough equivalent would be a 'park auntie' or a 'children's playground attendant'. Could you suggest anything more specific? I'm referring to a person who looks after small children in the playground or in a special lot in a public park, for instance. A literal translation of the Finnish term would be a 'park aunt', but the problem is this person can be a young girl too, or even a young male student who wants to earn some extra money. Usually, however, these 'park aunties' are elderly ladies.

3) I personally haven't been cycling for years now—jogging, yes!—wogging, yes!—walking, of course—but cycling—no! However, I remember how years ago cyclists started using a 'turvaviiri' ('safety pin' or 'safety pennant'), a 30–40-centimetre-wide pennant installed on the bicycle itself. The purpose was to prevent motorists from passing by at too close a distance. I think this was based on the idea that motorists, prudent not to have scratches on their cars, would instinctively pass cyclists at a wider range if there was a danger of this pin touching their precious cars. So, a device which was to increase safety. Is this kind of thing being used on bicycles in your countries? What's the term for it? (...) Seppo"

A number of answers were received, with explanations not only of the terms to be used but also with lists of national days or feast days (see earlier in this report) in different countries.

"#11 16-FEB-1990 03:24:13.52 From: IN%"tokiÉkopasker.IS"
To: tellaÉcc.Helsinki.FI
Subj: no subject (file transmission) (...)

turvaviiri (...)

Some bicyclists in Iceland use it. It is called 'bilafaela' in Icelandic (the spelling is not correct because Campus can not handle our upper ascii codes). The word means 'a thing that scares cars away'. (...)

De bedste hilsener,
Thorir Jonsson (...)"

"From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Sun 11-Feb-90 17:15 Sys
10001 (42)
Subject: Response to Seppo's words (...)

turvaviiri:

I used to use one of these in Berlin a few years ago and of course one sees them in Holland. However, I have no idea what they are called.

Protecting vulnerable groups like cyclists and children is not something in which we believe in UK! Best wishes - Tony"

"From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 14:05 Sys
Subject: Greetings (...)

I do have one of those pennant gadgets fixed to my bike. My wife bolted it on one day so I never saw the packet or the name. However, I now ride my bike in the New Forest so it spends most of its time folded away—otherwise I am continually ripping out branches and foliage with it. (...) Best wishes to all
Peter Milford"

"To: Global Village schools
From: PS26 (NYE013) Delivered: Thu 15-Feb-90 15:38 Sys 134 (44)
Subject: Seppo's words from the U.S. (...)

Dear Seppo,
My students and I have discussed the three words that you asked about.

These are our BEST definitions:

1. A national holiday is a day where most offices are closed. There is no school, no mail service, and banks are closed. Some small stores remain open.

We will tell more about national holidays later on.

2. A park attendant watches the children in playgrounds, although most parks do not have attendants. Mostly parents or babysitters have the task of guarding against park bullies.

3. A peg is a sharp object that protrudes from a bicycle wheel. We do not use bicycle's as transportation that often. (...)

Please send us a short description of what your national holidays are.
Terry Rosengart, and the children of P.S. 26 Bronx, NY, USA"

"From: ST.VINCENT.VITH.FORM (YDO076) Tue 13-Feb-90 14:05
We have the term NTA here—it is used to cover Non Teaching Assistants who provide support within the class—and MS, mid-day supervisors. I cannot recall hearing any other special term being used. (...)"

"From: DAWLISH (YMB080) Delivered: Sun 11-Feb-90 17:15 Sys 10001 (42)
Subject: Response to Seppo's words (...)

Puistotäti: your 'park auntie' is terrific! In schools we use dinner person/lady or lunchtime assistant. Locally there seems to be no 'playground language' word. We don't look after our children in public parks but I remember as a young boy being chased regularly by the

'parky' whose job it was to prevent children from enjoying themselves in public open spaces! (...)"

I replied to My Leigh the next day, explaining my stand-point:

"(...) Hm—just to prevent any misunderstandings. 'Parkie aunties' only work in the summer when those children who are in day-care centres spend a few hours out-of-doors, enjoying the excellent Finnish summer weather in a special playground area or whatever it might be called in English and which usually is part of a park. Of course in Britain, where the weather is a fair compromise between rain and fog, this kind of behaviour is not easily thought of... (...)"

This exchange of ideas concerning a few words included a lot more, viz. it revealed aspects of different cultural backgrounds. The US contribution, for instance, clearly pointed out how infrequently bicycles were used in that country when compared to Iceland or Britain. Another question revealed some differing emphases in the social welfare systems. Yet another consideration concerns the contextualised need for the words students were looking for; those words were not memorised by rote learning or learnt for some theoretical future needs—they were needed then and there, which probably heightened the meaningfulness of the search process.

7.2.8. The Metalanguage Level

The 'metalanguage' level is referred to when the target language (both discourse and object language levels) is more or less consciously and deliberately analysed. This kind of analysis can consist of grammatical explanations in the mother tongue or in the target language or, by and large, when language is used to analyse one's knowledge of the target foreign language (cf. e.g., Hellgren 1982, 43–44). The analysis is also likely to develop and heighten a metalinguistic awareness among the students (cf. e.g., Pontecorvo & Paoletti 1991). An activity of this kind resembles an explicit teaching strategy, focusing on cognitive learning (Stern 1983, 506), as presented in the theoretical part of this report, or, in Widdowson's (1978) terminology, the practice of the language skills in the abstract.

In a way, asking questions regarding special lexis already concerns the metalanguage level. In School B, on March 28th, 1990, Teacher B made an even more conscious effort to raise some students' awareness of the target language: to make one or two

groups work on a linguistic assignment that the British students could correct and comment on. When he suggested this to his students, he did not get much feedback. After the lesson, we thought of this linguistic assignment in the common room. I suggested we could take a Finnish novel, select a few interesting episodes in it, have them translated into English. This could be corrected and commented on by the British. What we would need was a novel or a poem that had been translated into English. The English version should be sent to Britain so the British could have it as a source when proposing amendments to the translation. Teacher B immediately suggested "The Seven Brothers" by Aleksis Kivi. Other Finnish writers he took up included Mika Waltari, Veijo Meri, and Väinö Linna. He promised to go to the city library to see if there were proper translations available.

On April 4th, 1990, when I visited School B, I was given the handouts Teacher B had prepared for the students concerning interpretation/translation exercises from Finnish into English. He had not laid "The Seven Brothers" aside, but had translated authentic English texts (articles, etc.) into Finnish. He was going to suggest these tasks to some groups so that the British partner school would check and revise the Finnish students' language. The original English text would be sent to Britain to serve as a reference text in the process.

Three groups (two groups of three boys each; one group of two girls) set off with the interpretation task. Teacher B patiently explained to all the three groups the main way of advancing: getting first familiar with the vocabulary, then thinking of necessary structures. Finally style and idioms should be checked.

On April 11th, 1990, I observed the boys whose task it was to interpret the Orwell text into English. The conversation was rather typical of the way words were being corrected all the way through. The boys had just typed three to five lines of Orwell. The boys had written "sciencefiction literature". (S = myself; B = one of the boys)

"B: 'Science fiction', as one word or as two words?

S: Generally, it is written as two words...

B: Yeah...

S: ... and 'literature' is written with one t only in English (...).

B: I see.

S: In all other languages there are two t's in it.

B: I see.

S: By the way, 'science fiction' is enough, there's no need to add 'literature'.

B: You mean the word 'literature' is not needed?

S: No, fiction actually means [*kaunokirjallisuus*]; science fiction means [*tieteiskirjallisuus*]. Literature means [*kaunokirjallisuus*] as such...

B: So that is enough?

S: Yeah. That's enough."

I then noticed the phrase "his latest book '1984'" (*hänen viimeisin kirjansa*), which we discussed and corrected to "his last book". The original articles which were to be interpreted into English by the students are in *Appendix B*. Teacher B's suggestion was warmly welcomed by his partner school teacher in Britain:

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: SCHOOLS.IT.UNIT (YOJ002) Delivered: Mon 23-Apr-90 18:31 Sys 1000)

Subject: Easter Greetings! (...)

Since beginning this communication, I have been handed your 'Translation'. I shall be very happy to support this by commenting on the re-translations of your students, provided the numbers do not reach three figures!!! (...) Lawrence."

Unfortunately, no feedback was ever received from Britain. The only advantage of this exercise could be seen in the effort the students put in expressing themselves in English in writing. Translation requires a good command of English and a working knowledge of how different stylistic matters can be translated, and could be considered a cue of a good metalinguistic awareness. It would have been interesting to see what kind of comments the British would have made concerning the translations. On the other hand, in the final analysis, this kind of activity radically differed from the main guidelines settled for the fieldwork period between the participating schools. Given that the main idea was, after all, to generate and initiate open communication, the concept of translation, even if it was meant to mean subject-accurate, not word-accurate, translation, did not fit perfectly in the teaching/learning process.

8. Credibility

Credibility of a research is often considered from three perspectives, *validity*, *reliability*, and *generalisability* even if other terms are also used in ethnographic research, e.g., *comparability*, *transferability*, *replicability*, *appropriateness*, *clarity*, *comprehensiveness*, *significance*, *authenticity*, and *honesty* (cf. e.g., Goetz & LeCompte 1984; Lincoln & Guba 1990; Syrjälä & Numminen 1988, 135; Tella 1991, 130; Tynjälä 1991). In this report, they will not be separated completely; rather, the question of credibility is considered more wholistically, by taking into account the generic nature of the study (an ethnographic multisite case study; developmental research; collaborative study geared towards strategic action). One of the fundamental principles, however, when discussing credibility is to give the reader a possibility to follow the way the researcher has presented the research findings and interpretations and to allow him either to accept or to counterargue them (cf. Mäkelä 1990, 53).

One of the main problems when discussing credibility of the present research report is concerned with the choice and categorisation of themes and topics. As the data gathered lend themselves easily to different kinds of categorisations concerning themes and topics, the present one needs justification.

The first threat to be avoided was to neglect part of the e-mails exchanged between the participating schools. It was most important to access all possible e-mails in order to have a complete collection of notices, messages, e-mails, and other materials exchanged. This was aimed at in a rather meticulous fashion (explained in Tella 1991), so that it would now seem reasonable to assume that I had the absolute majority of the correspondence at my disposal. I cross-checked it as much as possible, and a few e-mails were found thanks to this scrutiny just after the fieldwork period was officially finished (May, 1990).

The second threat to validity consisted of the choice of the themes to be presented in this report. It was based on several starting-points; first, on the approach, found in the official FL curriculum (Anon. 1985), for instance, according to which the delivery of teaching is concentrated on themes starting from oneself, from one's near surroundings, advancing little by little towards more global perspectives, finally covering the whole globe. However, the FL curriculum was not thought to be the only factor on which the categorisation was to be built; also, various thoughts and ideas

carried out on European or international levels were considered important. Besides, I as a researcher also made use of my own craft knowledge as a specialist in senior secondary school teaching so as to determine what sort of classification could best serve the reader and to illustrate most of the themes discussed. The question of frequency was also considered; some of the themes were, by force of nature, much more popular than others. Some were discussed over a long period of time; others only once or twice. However, it was not possible to know during the fieldwork period which of the themes would be once-only themes and which would represent continuing themes. Furthermore, their respective importance could not perhaps be valued solely according to the frequency registered. By and large, the viewpoint of *disciplined subjectivity* (cf. Erickson 1973) was respected in that the choice process was subjected to continual questioning and rearrangement during the analytical stage of writing the report. One more point of view was respected; the e-mails that were exchanged between the Finnish participating schools and their respective partner schools in Britain or in the USA were regarded as more important than messages received from other sources (Campus 2000 noticeboards, for instance). The relative importance of the former was based on the principle of mutual high communication proximity links, whose creating and establishing was one of the main targets as far as the social structure of the network was concerned. The significance of the latter messages and notices cannot be underestimated, though, as they provided the teachers with extra materials and essentially enlarged the repository of materials.

It has to be admitted, however, that the present categorisation only represents one possible way of classifying and analysing the data gathered. Several researchers have noticed (cf. e.g., Romiszowski & de Haas 1989) that the retrospective analysis of themes discussed or dealt with varies considerably even between the participants who share the same experience. In order to further reduce threats to internal reliability, a large number of examples were cited from the data, both low-inference descriptors (verbatim quotations, literal accounts of what was said or descriptions of the observees' behaviour) and high-inference comments (more interpretive, more comparative or conclusive written-up analyses, with more contextualised clues), as they would best illustrate the point, often presented in a context (cf. e.g., Croll 1986, 60; Erickson 1986, 144; Fetterman 1989; Goetz & LeCompte 1984, 160; Pfaffenberger 1988, 26; Richardson 1990; Wolcott 1990). Citing a number of genuine examples was also considered to lower the possible influence

of the empathy which researchers in general may develop with the observed and which can affect the interpretive comments included in the fieldnotes (cf. e.g., LeCompte & Goetz 1984, 41; also Kirk & Miller 1986). This could be regarded as a real threat to reliability of the study, insofar as I as a teacher of English could get too interested in the themes and topics discussed so as not to see their relevance for the whole process carried through on international communications networks. On the other hand, credibility of the study was raised by the fact that I as the researcher was quite familiar with the *argot* used in the school context studied (cf. LeCompte & Goetz 1984, 41). Choosing and assessing themes and topics is part of this familiarity.

Besides thematic choice and categorisation of themes and topics, the present research dealt with a more linguistically oriented problem of the target language. On the basis of the aims and goals of the official FL curriculum (Anon. 1985), both aspects of the present study appear quite relevant and to the point. It could be argued that they both represented educationally desirable targets as far as FL teaching was concerned. Consequently, the present study can be considered systemically valid (cf. Frederiksen & Collins 1989; Nickerson 1989).

If the problem of validity is looked at from the viewpoint of *face validity*, i.e., how well the choices made by the teacher and the researcher could be justified and substantiated to the outsiders (students and their parents, for instance), the fact that quite a few themes dealt with via e-mail were in harmony with the requirements and suggestions of the FL curriculum clearly made it easier and more understandable for the students to discuss these new themes. Even if not everything appealed to everybody in the beginning, there was a remarkable degree of flexibility as regards both teachers and students participating in the fieldwork period.

The issue of credibility can also be discussed from the viewpoint of how well the final report corresponds to the design originally applied to the research itself. In the present case, reporting has been done according to ethnographic research principles, thus aiming at being in resonance with the research design itself (cf. e.g., the resonance criteria of Lincoln & Guba 1990).

As regards the position of the researcher, I felt to be an active participant-observer with the result that in a number of teaching situations, the teachers and myself were helping the students to the same extent. When reporting the research findings, then, an active participant-observer is expected to throw light on his own behaviour, beliefs, disappointments, and reactions as well (cf. e.g.,

Goetz & LeCompte 1984; Lincoln & Guba 1990), which was done extensively in this report. In order to be as lucid as possible, I have reported my own actions in the first person singular, instead of resorting to the passive. In order to reduce the "I-witness" perspective (cf. Geertz 1988; Hess 1989; Johnston 1990) and to achieve a more "polyphonic" tone, observations and comments made by the teachers and students alike are cited.

Regarding the problems of *generalisability*, a case study, especially a multisite one as the present study, offers several opportunities. Even if ecological validity or repeatability is low, i.e., replication of the study is difficult and, perhaps, simply impossible, there are other possibilities. First of all, as the present study was also a developmental research project, whose aim was to construct a new, innovation-based FL learning environment, the fieldwork period and its findings can serve as a model to similar senior secondary schools. Consequently, external validity of the generalisations drawn from the study should perhaps be argued along pragmatic guidelines; if the model created leads to new questions or interpretations, then generalisations can be regarded as relatively well motivated. Second, *logical generalisability* (Hamilton 1980; cf. also Syrjälä & Numminen 1988, 175) also resides with the reader rather than solely with the researcher, i.e., the reader is entitled or invited to draw conclusions of his own on the basis of his own experience so that he may apply the research findings to his own walk of life or field of interest. In this sense, the present research could serve as a catalyst for further action to be fulfilled in other teachers' own classrooms, for instance. Lincoln & Guba (1990) speak of empowerment criteria, which refer to the capacity of the research report to encourage the readers to initiate further action. In this sense, the question of generalisability may be connected to raising the level of awareness of the readers concerning the main objectives of the research. Thus a term *applicability* could perhaps be more relevant than generalisability as such, because it can be seen to include the criterion of *transferability* as well, i.e., at least part of the model can be transferred to new learning settings.

9. Discussion

9.1. Discussion on Contents and Conclusions

In the following, some conclusions will be drawn from the results and interpretations presented in this research report. There is a conscious effort of linking the theoretical starting-points, the research problem areas and the research questions to the research findings and to the interpretations drawn from the data gathered during the fieldwork period of the research project. Discussion will be focused on contents (themes and topics) of the e-mail communication evidenced in the data gathered. Another point is to discuss the linguistic perspective included in the e-mails exchanged between students, teachers, and myself. Some conclusions will also be drawn from the learning environment provided by computer-mediated communication on international communications networks principally through e-mail. The research method, based on an ethnographic approach, partly determined how data were analysed. The ethnographic techniques were supported by a thematic and textual analysis on themes and topics as well as on linguistic features. E-mail communication was regarded as texts, cognitive processes, and as communicative acts. It opened up new horizons and raised both teachers' and students' awareness of various possibilities geared towards computer-based activities in FL teaching.

9.1.1. The Curriculum

By and large, e-mail communication paved the way for having some new contents and new kinds of focuses on methods of work in FL teaching. It also demonstrated how easily current affairs, e.g., political events in the news, could be incorporated into FL teaching through e-mail. The aim of bringing a distinct flavour of the outside world into the classroom was well achieved. A step was taken in a futurological perspective towards the construct of a 'virtual school' (cf. Blystone 1989; Paulsen 1987), which is no longer surrounded by traditional, physical walls but which spontaneously mixes with the surrounding society.

Another important observation is that e-mail communication facilitated writing *across* the senior secondary school curriculum instead of just writing along the guidelines of the foreign language specific curriculum. Several cross-curricular links emerged during fieldwork, bolstering communication between different groups of

teachers. For instance, areas of commonality included professional weather reports and environment issues, encouraging co-operation at school level across teachers of a number of school subjects. Certain contributions, like feast days in Iceland, deepened co-operation between teachers of English and Swedish.

9.1.2. An Open Learning Environment

On the whole, e-mail communication encouraged writing and communications networks made it possible to exchange ideas and messages across the world. Emphasis switched from teacher-centred, large group sponsored teaching towards a more individualised and learner-centred working environment, towards a holistic learning environment. From an epistemological viewpoint this environment was characterised by discursive flexibility which e-mail systems facilitated. E-mail communication proved multidirectional (from one/many to one/many), while the rest of the media used in FL teaching, such as video and school TV, are unidirectional (from one to many).

The research showed that e-mail communication gave a good chance of practising one's language proficiency in open-ended linguistic situations. The shift from form to content was achieved, as only a few messages were intended to throw light on structures; rather, a free flow of ideas—and with it expressions, idioms, use of lexis—was demonstrated in e-mail messages both sent and received. It was, however, felt that teaching facilities and different groupings had to be used flexibly. The hourly resource system implemented in Finnish senior secondary schools was in principle a flexible administrative solution, because it contributed to carrying out an open learning environment. Setting up the social network (inter-school e-mail links) for the fieldwork period was a success and turned out participant-oriented as it could capitalise on fairly versatile allocation of time concerning goals and aims and teaching contents. The level of flexibility was increased by the fact that time could be allocated to those topics students took greatest interest in.

In the main, the fieldwork period opened a channel into a stimulus-rich and information-rich learning environment, in which deliberate decisions had to be made with regard to the choice of materials to be dealt with in more detail. This was closely connected to the physical flexibility offered by computer-mediated communications systems, giving students and teachers a possibility to work

in different workplaces (school libraries, computer rooms, subject-allocated classrooms, homes) but still on the same project.

This learning environment could be considered from several angles: from that of the FL teachers and that of the students, for instance. But it can also be assessed from the viewpoint of writing/reading activities and from the viewpoint of introducing a technological innovation into FL teaching.

9.1.3. Process-Led Collaboration

When interpretations are drawn from the point of view of the writing and reading processes, a number of conclusions can be made. First of all, the whole writing/reading situation changed to some extent. Instead of the traditional way of writing one's composition once only, the open learning environment gave ample opportunity to "prewrite" one's compositions, poems, and other messages, and to edit and revise these writings before giving them any final touches and sending them via e-mail.

A change took place in the choice of themes and topics. In ordinary writing situations in FL teaching, themes and topics are nominated or designated almost exclusively by the teacher, very much along the suggestions of the official FL curriculum and the textbook studied. In the present study also students could—and did—nominate topics to be discussed together or to be suggested to foreign partner school students. An obvious rise of degree of liberty took place in this respect. This kind of topic choice did not jeopardise the implementation of the suggestions of the curriculum; rather, it complemented these suggestions and in some respects brought more up-to-date and topical issues into focus, which also meant a move towards autonomy in FL learning.

From students' point of view, according to the so-called topicalisation hypothesis, negotiable topic choice was thought to be one of the assets of e-mail communication. Free negotiation or collaborative agreement was in harmony with the focus of the official curriculum (Anon. 1985) on students' personality and its development. Having a relatively free choice of themes reduced the tension between schools themes and themes of more personal interest. It would seem logical to presume that students, when allowed to write about themes and topics of their own choice, would be more motivated to write about these themes, and that they would know more about what they write. This kind of supposition did not come true, after all; students mostly appeared quite happy about themes

suggested by their teacher or the printed textbook. This did not mean that they did not generate innovative ideational processes or that they did not suggest topics of their own, but the majority of the themes were teacher-sponsored. There were exceptions, as a number of individual students suggested they write about some demanding topic, which naturally was encouraged and which always led to high-quality contributions.

Other changes took place as well. Instead of writing most of their compositions and other writings alone, students could now make use of peer tutoring and collaborative methods of work, composing their e-mails together with some other students. The level of interaction arose considerably during fieldwork, as collaborative writing was introduced into the classes. This also intensified the need for the use of co-operative skills among students and between them and the teacher.

The quality of writing increased as writing changed from teacher-sponsored and teacher-led writing, usually only to be marked and graded, into real-purpose writing with genuine audiences around the world instead of having the teacher as audience. In this way, writing stopped being something "hidden", addressed to the teacher and more or less discreetly returned by him back to the writer. A collaborative effort made writing and reading more public, drawing various social and negotiation skills into the foreground. The product-gearred writing activity changed into a process-led collaborative activity. The same kind of development took place in the reading activities.

Another important point was that the modes of writing became more versatile. Even if ordinary class writing at its best is aimed at several modes (or genres) of writing, most of the writing tends to be narrative or descriptive. In e-mail communication, conversely, a multiple mode approach was available and achieved, as different kinds of e-mails required different kinds of replies, allowing personal and expressive but also argumentative use of language, in addition to exchanges of factual information.

From teachers' point of view, the practice of writing became more meaningful as they could master—better than earlier—the process of writing *in situ*, instead of having to content themselves with evaluating students' writings only afterwards (evaluation *post ex facto*). Earlier, the teacher read the student's writing, marked and returned it to the student, who more or less carelessly browsed it. In e-mail communication, much of the evaluation process is informal, along the principles outlined in the whole language approach to teaching writing. Some student compositions were

usually read aloud to the rest of the students. Now, reading became more public, as the same writings (e-mails) were often studied by a number of students, who collaborated with each other and with the teacher in order to grasp the message as fully as possible and in order to be able to react to it accordingly. The fact that not every student made adequate use of these opportunities does not diminish the intrinsic value of this kind of learning environment.

9.1.4. A New Repository of Teaching Materials

Another important consideration is that incoming e-mails, notices and messages coming up from noticeboards and conferences formed a substantial repository of teaching and learning materials. Different reading styles could be used when dealing with this repository of texts. Some were simply skimmed or scanned, while others were read either intensively or extensively. In fact, the repository gathered became so substantial that much of it had to be left for subsequent discussion (or even undiscussed) in classes. This closely resembles the idea of Smith (1988, 58) when he spoke of the growth of an 'electronic grey literature'. In this sense, the repository made up by the incoming e-mails differed radically from the school compositions commonly written in FL classrooms, which there is usually no need or desire to go back to after they have been written, marked, and returned.

Fortunately, a number of the themes nominated remained topical for quite some time (e.g., eating habits, local descriptions, hobbies, and other ways of spending one's free time). The multinational infrastructure on which the social network of school links was based shed further light on crosscultural differences. Besides ordinary e-mails quite a few requests for international penpals were received. Part of this material served as extra stimuli for the teachers.

9.1.5. Language in E-Mail Communication

The second main focus in this research report was laid on language used in e-mail communication in comparison with classroom-based and textbook-sponsored communication. As e-mail communication was believed to resemble spoken communication, special attention was paid to written products as *parole*, instead of analysing them uniquely as *langue*.

A number of indications pointed out that e-mail communication could be divided into two different kinds of communication. First, with reference to *on-line writing* in particular, e-mails were characterised by features usually connected to oral communication. These included an abundant use of elliptical and fragmentary language, with lots of colloquial linguistic features. Recipients' first names were also frequently used. The missing support of non-verbal communication was compensated by using textual concretisations and visualisations of exclamations, hesitations, and disbelief, among other things. The use of specially designated mail icons was infrequent, and it seemed to be linked to the level of expertise concerning computers, word-processing, and telecommunications software.

Finnish teachers' attitudes to minor typing errors (made by them or by their students) were lenient (very much in harmony with the principles of the communicative methodology), albeit somewhat apologetic, as most of them obviously were not accustomed to typing loose and faulty sentences and sending them via e-mail without first trying to correct them.

Second, part of e-mail communication consisted of *off-line writings*, prepared first on the word-processor as a deliberate and conscious effort of writing. Some of these aimed at a literary style, while on-line writings usually reflected casual and easy-going style with more focus on cohesion and appropriate linguistic cues, such as conjunctions and pronouns. Off-line writings showed more textual and linguistic coherence and were more hierarchically organised wholes. Some of the students' writings had first been drafted with pen and paper before being typed on to diskettes, while the Finnish teachers almost exclusively typed their messages on-line or, rather exceptionally, first on a word-processor. It is important to notice that different kinds of writings coexist in e-mail communication, as miscellaneous messages are being transmitted through e-mail.

On the whole, thanks to the open learning environment created by the use of international communications networks through e-mail communication, the participants encountered linguistic situations which required many-sided use of English at all three levels (object language and discourse language as well as metalanguage), thus also heightening the metalinguistic awareness of their language proficiency.

Finnish teachers and students used more formal and business-like language than foreign partner school teachers and students. The foreign participants' way of writing, however, slightly influ-

enced the style of three of the four Finnish teachers so that it grew more spontaneous and free-flowing towards the end of the field-work period.

It was realised that phatic use of language (contact establishing and supporting) was essential so that the functionality of the communication channel could be upheld. On the other hand, a lot of artistic, emotive, and poetic functions were satisfied so that e-mail communication was not purely referential or informative use of the target language.

9.2. Further Research

The present research project will consist of three separate reports altogether. The first volume (Tella 1991) outlined the telematic and social structures of the network between the Finnish and foreign participants and laid focus on the introduction of a technological innovation (international communications networks and electronic mail) into foreign language classrooms. The present report concentrates on contents (themes and topics) and on language used in e-mail communication. The third volume (Tella 1992) will be focused on the participating students' attitudes, initiative, and relationships with their teachers and the researcher. The question of gender sensitivity with regard to the use of computers and telecommunications software will also be discussed in this volume.

From a technological point of view, more research could be conducted in regard to the software applications which tend to change *word*-processing to *text*-processing. These applications include dedicated spelling checkers and thesauruses, whose purpose is to help users analyse the style of their writings, and software dedicated to analyse and assess readability or increase comprehension (on-line dictionaries). As international communications networks and electronic mail continue to develop technologically, it would seem important to follow these developments especially from the viewpoint of the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). From the viewpoint of reading, further research could be conducted on issues concerning specialised reading strategies in computer-mediated communication.

From a FL methodological point of view, more emphasis could be laid on the ways how pedagogical applications of Information Technologies can be incorporated into teaching strategies in FL classrooms and how they could fertilise the discussion of various components of methods (approach; design; procedure).

In Finland, focus on curricula is nowadays changing towards curriculum development. It would be important to link this development to technological innovations, such as the increasingly growing use of e-mail, not only as goals but, more important, as appropriate tools for teaching, learning, and communication.

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*Appendices***Appendix A**

Themes and Situations of the Eight Courses of English as a First Foreign Language (Anon. 1985, 66—72)

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Situations</i>
1 • oneself • home, family, relatives, friends, other people • school, relationships with school mates • everyday activities • human relationships • problems of young people • ways of spending one's free time • relationships between generations	• talking about oneself, one's family and own neighbourhood • telling about everyday activities and one's own experiences • chatting informally (greetings, introducing oneself, 'how are you?', thanking, congratulating, excusing) • answering the phone and calling up • writing a postcard or a letter
2 • different hobbies • leisure time in general • spending one's holiday • societies and clubs • travelling and traffic • common service situations	• presenting one's hobbies • presenting one's own club or society • interviewing school mates about their hobbies and clubs • presenting a hobby popular in Finland • presenting another person's hobby through reading or listening • information retrieval and transfer in common service situations (accommodation; eating out; traffic; entertainment; shopping) • a story of a trip
3 • importance of language proficiency in studying and work life • requirements and necessary training of some professions • applying for a job or pursuing studies in Finland or abroad	• discussions/interviews regarding studying, work and professions (e.g., young person/employer; young people/parents; subordinate/superior)

- summer jobs; sharing work in one's family; salary and pocket money
 - changing character of work; future professions
 - importance of work; job ethics; unemployment
- 4
- living; forms of living; living in the country and in cities
 - geographical conditions
 - health services; social security in Finland and in Anglo-Saxon countries
 - migration
 - associations; politics
 - religion and church
 - law and order
- 5
- Information and technology
- achievements in various fields of science (inventors; prominent representatives of different fields)
 - presenting one field of science
 - one central branch of industry of Finland
 - progress of traffic
 - conquest of space
 - information technology and computers
 - developmental perspectives; futurology
- Information retrieval
- presenting and comparing mass media
 - influence of mass media
 - advertising and consumer enlightening
 - ways of information retrieval
 - telecommunications and mass information
- 6
- presenting educational systems
 - educational possibilities
 - literature (short story; novel; play; lyrics)
- applying for a job/starting studying; introducing oneself; information retrieval of training and work experiences; answering questions about these matters; giving extra information; presenting one's school reports / professional reports; filling up application forms
 - getting familiar with articles, literature extracts and interviews concerning these topics
- (not specified)
- (not specified)
- (not specified)

- cinema and theatre
 - music and arts
 - forms of art as a hobby or as a profession
 - Finnish and Anglo-Saxon cultural figures
 - traditions; cultural customs/manners
 - pop culture
 - aesthetic issues in general
- 7 • relation between man and nature (not specified)
- natural resources; division and utilisation
 - nature protection and conservation of nature balance
 - environment planification
 - various living environments
 - nutrition issues
 - populations issues
 - nature in Finland
 - human conceptions of nature and universe
 - a field of applied natural sciences (medicine; psychology; environment protection, etc.)
 - geography; biology; physics; chemistry
 - interest connected to nature
- 8 • position of Finland in the world (not specified)
- international policy and economics
 - peace education and issues concerning peace
 - modern division of economy and co-operation with developing countries
 - international co-operation and international associations
 - human value and racial problems
 - humanitarian associations
 - different society interpretations and movements of ideas
 - national economy and business enterprise
 - current international events
 - national identity

Appendix B

The Original Texts of Teacher B

'To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: Teacher B Delivered: Mon 23-Apr-90 16:36 Sys 10001 (123)

Subject: Translation

Dear Lawrence,

The following texts have to do with some new initiatives we wish to complete before school breaks up, i.e. the end of May. The original idea is roughly as follows: students try their hand at translating some pieces of writing from Finnish into English. The Finnish versions are in fact translations from English original texts which I am enclosing in the following for you to see what they are aiming at. There are naturally several aspects to a translation, e.g. grammatical-lexical correctness, stylistic appropriateness, and at least one more aspect is whether the translation bears even a remote resemblance to the kind idiomatic English native speakers would use. From a purely English as a Foreign Language point of view we are hoping for a few comments as far as the students' translations are concerned, either from your students or from you yourself.

Text 1

Where All Think Alike, No One Thinks Very Much

Eric Blair, better known as George Orwell, painted an awesome picture of future society in his last book '1984', which presents the first anti-utopia in the history of speculative science fiction. Many books had been written about the future, but all of them were optimistic. '1984', on the contrary, is strictly pessimistic. As a matter of fact, it must be considered a warning of what will happen if the freedom of thought is not maintained.

In the book, the earth is divided into three sections. Each section, due to the dark human drives, exploits other sections. It is the system that is important, a single human being is only a face in the crowd.

Thinking people are dangerous. That is why society has to prevent people from thinking too much. They say with a tender voice, 'The end justifies the means' and simultaneously torture people who dare to use their brain. The ultimate sign of the fact that totalitarian society is afraid of too much thinking is the intensity of their propaganda and brain washing.

There is no way a society can function without intelligent and reliable people. A totalitarian society does not survive when people learn to trust themselves.

Text 2

21, Seaview Road
Exbridge.
21st June, 19..

Editor,
'Exbridge Times',

Market Street,
Exbridge

Dear Sir,

I am absolutely fed up with all this anti-car rubbish. The last straw came when Exbridge Town Council decided to ban city-centre traffic. Thus, in one move, they have turned a thriving town into a desert. Shoppers will prefer to shop in Pitsmouth because at least there they will not have to walk one mile from a car park!

The blue-eyed environmentalists complain about the smell, the sulphuric acid, the lead, the noise, the astronomical building costs, the vibration, the accidents figures, the loss of good agricultural land, and so on and so forth. But I bet that not one of them would be prepared to do without the many advantages of a car—the freedom to come and go as you please, the speed and comfort, the availability of emergency services like ambulances and fire engines, and many more. And remember, too, how many jobs depend on a successful car-manufacturing industry.

I can only hope that the Council comes to its senses before it is too late.

Yours faithfully, John Anderson

Text 3

What I Have Learnt at School

Pupils tend to associate school with a number of negative factors, such as tiredness, failure and frustrating work. We feel that school limits our freedom and creative work. Yet, we should come to think of the developing effects of school and education in general.

Personally, I consider that the most important thing school has given to me is not only the large amount of knowledge we have absorbed but also the way we look at the world—critically but hopefully. We have been encouraged, not always, however, to think with our own brains, to use the whole of our capacity and to bring about new ideas. What I have also learned is to concentrate on one matter and that way reach results. Besides, I have realized that hard work gives satisfaction and self-confidence.

On the other hand, I cannot sometimes help feeling depressed and stressed as so much time should be given to school. This has, however, taught me to share my time: one is capable of doing amazingly many things during one day when just making a difference between the important and the unimportant.

I have also had a chance to get to know many persons and personalities and learned to respect other people's opinions. On the whole, I think that school provides us with such skills and knowledge whose importance we may understand only later on.

P.S. There don't seem to be any translations ready yet, so we'll just have to wait and see.

Thanking you in advance

Yours [Teacher B]"

Appendix C US School Descriptions

"#1 15-MAY-1990 07:47:21.82 NEWMAIL
From: IN%"SCHWAEGERLÉvms.macc.wisc.edu" "MICHAEL
SCHWAEGERL"
To: TELLAEcc.Helsinki.FI (and Teachers A, B, C1, and C2)
Subj: Letters from Wisconsin (...)

American Schools

Schools in the United States vary widely. I will talk about school in the state of Wisconsin. Our high schools last four years (9th through 12th grade). Our schools are co-ed, with both boys and girls attending. I feel this works because it gives us a more realistic view of social interactions in the real world.

We have a 7-hour school day going from 8:15 to 15:15. Our classes are 50 minutes long. We have five minute passing times in between classes and 30 minutes for lunch. We can bring our own lunch from home or we can buy it from the cafeteria at school. Our teachers like to assign homework and we are supposed to get about one and a half hours of homework each day.

Students are required to take certain courses. In order to graduate, we must take four years of English, three years of social study, and two years each of science and math. In order to get into many colleges, we need at least two years of a foreign language. French and Spanish are commonly taken, though many other courses, including Chinese and German are taught.

Overall, I think our system does an adequate job of educating us while providing for our social needs.

By Jim Argraves (...)

Hello. My name is Josh Goldfoot, and I go to James Madison Memorial High School in Madison, Wisconsin. Madison is a largely unimportant town, surrounded by great numbers of boring farms and lots of cows. Memorial High is named for a former president of the United States, James Madison, who was largely an unimportant and boring man.

It the US, schools vary widely; depending on where you live, you could get either one of the best educations in the world or one of the worst. Local governments decide how much, or how little to spend on their schools. Luckily, I go to one of the better public schools in my state.

By Josh Goldfoot. Madison Memorial High School

Our school is a public school, which means anyone can attend. There are no separated schools in Madison, but there are private school where you pay tuition, and along with the regular curriculum of math, science, history, english, gym and other extra classes they teach religion. Luckily, we don't go to that kind of a school. Our

school day is eight hours long, with five minutes of passing time between classes, a thirty minute lunch hour, and five minutes of morning announcements. We begin at 8:15 AM and get out at 3:15 PM. Our school year is nine months long, from September to June. As it is now May, everyone is excited for the end of school and the beginning of summer break.

There are many activities at our school which all students can participate in. Sports such as soccer (do you call it football?), basketball, baseball, hockey, gymnastics, volleyball, tennis, and football (American style) are some of the favorites. There are also other things to get involved in at school like the math team, the school newspaper, and the yearbook. Sometimes it is hard to decide which of these great activities to take part in!

Memorial is a very large high school with over 1500 students. This might seem like a large number to you for just a high school, but it is very comfortable. It is fairly easy to make new friends if you are outgoing, since there is always someone new to meet. (...)

We're glad we had this chance to meet, too! If you are interested in learning more about the United States, please write back. Bye!

Megan Piper, Jenny Brightbill, and Laura Young. (...)

We here in Wisconsin have a variety of interests, hobbies, and past-times. They are so numerous that we'll just write about the few we do. Starting in fall, we play a lot of football (American style). It's very popular here and many people play. Our school has many teams that often play other schools in the area. By the end of the football season, it is beginning to get very cold here and snow is often already on the ground. During the winter, it usually gets very cold down to below -20 degrees Celsius. The snow gets very deep. Our favorite hobbies during the winter season include downhill skiing and hockey.

The hills around here are not very large, but many people fly to Colorado (that's a state in the Western US) to ski in the mountains. Hockey and basketball are popular sports played in winter. Our school also has teams for these two sports.

Around March or April, the snow begins to melt and spring arrives. Everyone begins to think of summer and summer break from school. Spring school sports include track and field and soccer. During spring break, the week before Easter, many people take trips south to someplace warm and sunny, as it is usually not very warm here. Then, finally, school ends (near the end of May or beginning of June) and vacation begins. Wisconsin has many small lakes full of fish. Some of my friends have cabins on these lakes and we often go waterskiing and fishing during the hot, humid summer months. Those are the best months of the year. Many people get summer jobs in order to earn some money. Then summer is over and school begins again.

Thus goes the cycle of our school year. Tell us how life where you live is. Hope to hear from you soon!

Darin Kubly and Dustin McIntire (...)"

Appendix D

German School Descriptions

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys 3015

To: School C

Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

Dear friends in GLOBAL VILLAGE, (...)

Those who are new GLOBAL VILLAGE I would like to tell that our school-building had to be evacuated in December 88 because it was heavily contaminated by asbestos. Pupils were sent to four other schools in different parts of Hamburg. Repairs are continuing. However, most of the students have returned to the suburb by now.

Regards Ulrich

I) Our school today

(Note : this section was heavily influenced by class 12 reading Townsend's SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE at the moment)

OUR SCHOOL TODAY by Aidyn Yalcin (17)

Our school was a real joy for us but since we have to go to other schools it is for me like a nightmare. (Our school was closed because of an asbestos problem so we were sent on to other schools).

Every morning I've to hurry to go to the busstop because my way takes 10 minutes till I arrive. On my way I often see the full buses which are passing me because I haven't reached the busstop. If I finally arrive the busses don't pick me up because they're so full and I've to wait for another one. That's the reason why I'm often late.

When I arrive I've to listen to a sermon from a teacher who is complaining that I'm late again. Just my luck.

When we've breaks we've to hang around because our senior students recreation room is a horrible mess that only pigs can survive in. (...)

ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF ULF LUBKA

by Ulf Lubka (18)

I usually get up between 7 and 7.10 in the morning. (...) School usually starts at 8.00 o'clock except on Friday when it starts at 9.50. The lessons are long and boring except for my favoured subjects which are English, philosophy and music. School ends between 15.30 and 16.15 (it depends on the day: Monday: 15.30, Tuesday: 15.30, Wednesday: 11.35, Thursday: 16.15, Friday: 15.30). I am at home about 15.45 when I have school until 15.30 and about 16.30 when I have school until 16.15. (...) If I have got homeworks to do I do them after the training or if I don't have training I do them after school. I usually go to bed about 23.00 o'clock and sleep until the next morning when I get up again and my boring life begins again.

HOW TO GET MARKS

In our school from class 5 to class 8 we get marks from 1 to 6. From class 9 to 10 we have different courses which means that good pupils are in one course and bad ones in the other. In the course with good pupils there are marks from B1 to B4 and from A1 to A6. In the other course pupils get marks from B4 to A6 so they cannot get for example a B2. If a A-class student often writes B4s then he can rise to the better course. In classes 11 to 13 we get points from 0 to 15 (15 points are the best). Our marks consist of our tests and our orally participation. The tests are valued by 40 % and our oral participation which includes homeworks and reports are valued by 60 %

CLASSES & COURSES IN A GERMAN COMPREHENSIVE

You have to attend school from class 5 (10 year olds) to class 10 (16 year olds). At the end of this time you hopefully have passed the so called intermediate school or the modern secondary school. There is no homework from class 5 to class 10. We have special hours during the daily school-hours to prepare our homeworks. There are two further lessons in the afternoon, except Wednesday afternoon (teacher's conference day).

Most of the lessons last 45 minutes. From class 5 to class 10 we have special lessons in which we can play e. g. football, tennis or other things in which we are interested in. In class 7 we have to choose some new subjects e. g. a second foreign language like Spanish or French (English is compulsory). In class 7 two or three classes are put together and then the pupils are differentiated in those ones who have got the better marks and in those ones who have got the less good marks. This is only done in Mathematics and English. You take the pupils and form two differentiated courses: one with a higher level and the others have to attend less demanding lessons.

In class 9 we get different marks. They are called 'A' and 'B'-marks. There are further differentiations in class 9 in Biology, Physics, Chemistry, German etc. . Most of the pupils finish school after class 10.

If the marks of the pupils are good enough they can attend school for three further years to get their school leaving examinations ABITUR (qualifying for admission to a university)

From class 11 to class 13 you get a new mark-system (points from 0-15). At the end of class 13 you have to pass written and oral tests in four subjects. These are three written tests and one oral test. You have got five hours to write the first two tests in your most important subjects. These are called 'Leistungskurse' and are chosen at the beginning of class 12. You choose two further subjects in which you have to write a third and fourth test. These four subjects are the most important and the main-subjects in class 12-13. (...)"

Appendix E

A Japanese School Description

To: School C [and to the Global Village] (...)
From: KDD045 Delivered: Mon 19-Feb-90 9:32 Sys 10001 (39)
Subject: testing

Dear Global Village friends,

This is the first time to utilize the mail ref. file.
Last time I did give it a try, I might have failed.
I hope it will work well.
The following is the introduction of my school.

=====
I'm an English teacher at Oyama Nishi High School. The age range of our students are between 15 and 18.

Our school has three years, each of which has 6 classes. One class consists of 47; the rate of the boys and girls are different from class to class. But as a whole girls outnumber boys. Now there are about 850. Most of the students have a wish to go to an advanced school such as colleges, universities, or vocational schools. Others will get a job right after graduating from high school.

Our school is located about 70 km north of Tokyo, which is the capital of Japan. You can't miss Tokyo on your map, but there is no mark of Oyama, I think. Perhaps you have Nikko. Nikko is also within Tochigi-ken as our city is. Oyama is flat and has no high hills.

On a winter clear day we can see Mt. Fuji from our school building, though the apparent size of it is very small and we can hold it in our fingers. Have you ever heard of the name of Mt. Fuji ?

I hope to hear from you soon.

Best wishes,
Noriko Iwahara
Oyama Nishi High School

741 Matunuma Oyama-shi Tochigi-ken 323 Japan

Tel:0285-37-1188

P.S. I'd be very happy to know if you really receive this message.
Thank you."

Appendix F

A Canadian School Description

"#10 10-DEC-1989 15:17:11.61 NEWMAIL
From: IN%"USERNBSP@SFU.BITNET" "Trevor Owen"
To: TELLA@cc.Helsinki.FI
Subj: RE: Greetings (...)

Seppo—(...)The students were asked to write about one day in their lives—a particular day that they remembered—and to tell us about it in a way that was not like a list of events. This piece, written by Maxeen Paabo, who serves as editor of our school paper, *The Words-Worth*, emerged as a stream of consciousness 'prose poem.' Maxeen intended that it be read as quickly as possible, with the reader taking as few breaths as possible. A real rush!

Cheers
Trevor

A DAY IN MY LIFE

BEEP...BEEP...BEEP...BEEP...BEEP...BEEP the alarm is ringing muffled in my desk drawer max get up god i hate school i just want to sit here all day and veg watching my soap operas which i haven't seen since the summer

it really makes me resent school having to get up for it and everything the way teachers expect us to get up every day and go through a monotonous routing making our lives an eternal visit to our grandmothers house just to trudge along pretending to be happy with our cheery little faces to spew out all the information we have eaten the night before with disgust (...)

i walk to the school thinking all the way about what i am going to do when i get home and i look at my hand as the coffee makes a red burn streak down my palm and i think i really shouldn't walk so fast because i spill too much

so i go through the day at school putting my foot outside the big silent doors just as i'm about to collapse from the weight of my newly stuffed brain and i go home to the shallow house and feel new

cooking diner for my family i always think about the day and stare into my poochiekins brown eyes as i remember how fucked the world is but i tell myself i'm not artsie-fartsie so i cook the fishy and smell my hands until my family comes home (...)

maxeen paabo 12c october 27 1989"

Appendix G

A City Description (Toronto)

"#1 10-DEC-1989 14:09:42.33 NEWMAIL
From: IN%"USERNBSP@SFU.BITNET" "Trevor Owen"

I see the night vapourize into twilight as I climb to the top of the ramp. The blue that hangs over the lake and fades into the water is interrupted only by a few cotton candy clouds that seem to have strayed into the area rather mischievously. A soft, pink light seems to emanate from them, like the aura of a small child with sun-streaked hair. Further along the highway that stretches out before the city, I can see the ever growing cluster of buildings and sky scrapers. At five thirty it is still dark enough to see the lights in the buildings left on over night. How deathly the city would look if we were all to conserve energy. The rising sun's light reflects off walls of glass that revel and dance to the quiet hum on the highway, against the expanse of glorious morning blue. So unreal, yet there it is in front of me like a giant postcard. Like all things beautiful and elusive, I want to capture it and bottle it, give it a name, classify it and possess it, hang it in my living room.

My little life is an invisible gas, with no definite shape or form, only taking the shape of its container. The city is the frame work within which my life unfolds. To see it like this, from this vantage point, makes me feel as if I've stepped out of reality and for once I am not enveloped in my life, swirling in the whirlwind or wallowing in the sludge. I watch it all as if it is not mine, like in a dream in which I am the star, but I am also the audience expecting the credits to roll by, the lights to go on, to step in pop corn.

I measure my own growth against the glass and concrete in the sky. In the midst of my eighteenth year, my life finally seems to be going somewhere. I move through the routine of the days as if packing for a long-awaited trip, knowing that careful preparation is necessary. To see the outline of my existence wide awake, at her glorious best from this distance allows me to see life in perspective. This stepping back from reality is like stepping back from the blackboard where you are engrossed in a mathematical disaster. The flaws suddenly seem easier to find, the solution no longer seems impossible and impossibilities become easier to deal with.

To see my beautiful city as a cluster of buildings on the lake at dawn, the broccoli-islands across the harbour, the vast expanse of blue melting into blue fills my lungs with a deep sense of freedom and excitement at the idea that that expanse of blue goes all the way around the world and back.

I continue along the highway, across the city, as my breathing goes back to normal and I leave it behind. The sun's angle has changed, increased, indicating the passing of time. The world unfolds before me, over the horizon, like a paper fan. The early morning promises nothing more than a cloudless day and a world of possibilities.

Alice Lee"

Appendix H

A City Description (Hamburg)

"From: JORDAN (UKU006) Delivered: Tue 13-Feb-90 2:18 Sys
3015
To: School C
Subject: Newsletter from Germany (...)

LAST WEEK IN HAMBURG (31. January—8. February)

by Bettina Pogarell, 17 years old

I couldn't enjoy the events in Hamburg last week. First, we had a thunderstorm and many houses & cars were destroyed by a violent storm. Also there was the danger that the river 'Elbe' would overflow some districts of our town. A lot of trees were damaged and for younger pupils primary schools were closed for that day.

Next there was an announcement which made me angry. A few years ago Mathias Rust landed with his plane on the 'Red Place' in Moscow. Last year he made a murderous assault on a nurse in Hamburg. Soon he will get his trial, but up to this date he is released on bail !!!

Last week Hamburg's pupils got their semester school reports. With them a new school semester began. For adult education too a new semester began. These courses are in the evening. They offer courses to learn foreign languages or typewriting, dancing etc. I take a course in photography. Our topic is 'creative photography'.

We will make a cultural report about a neighbouring district. I hope it will turn out well. (...)

III) about Hamburg

(***)

FREIE UND HANSESTADT HAMBURG (history)

The free and hanseatic town of Hamburg is the biggest city in the FRG with 1.658 mill inhabitants. Hamburg is one of 11 federal states and situated on both sides of the river Elbe in the north of W-Germany. Two thirds of the German shipping companies as well as many important retail and export companies operate from Hamburg. Hamburg is one of the most important ports in the world handling goods from all corners of this planet. Around the year 825 the Hamburg castle came into being. During the next centuries a big town arose. In 1215 old- and newtown came together and in these years the population of Hamburg counted around 5,500 people. Hamburg was one of the first members of the Hanse (The Hanse was an organization of merchant-towns in northern Europe). So the town became an important place for commerce around the North Sea and for the Baltic territories. With the foundation of the first German opera and the Hamburg national theatre a cultural peak in Hamburg was reached in the 17th and 18th centuries. As early as 1832, after the cholera epidemic, they laid water pipes. In Hamburg water was

being delivered by watercarriers the éHummelé with two buckets across their shoulders. According to Götz von Berlichingen (Goethe) the watercarriers responded to the cat-calls of the people of Hamburg 'Hummel Hummelé with éMors Morsé.

In the night of 4th to 5th May 1842 fire broke out at Deichstrasse. It rapidly spread finding plentiful nourishment in the stores and it could not be put out in time. Fire-engines and firemen were sent from everywhere. Later help came from all over the world. It amounted to about 7 million marks. The éGreat Fireé destroyed one third of Hamburg.

This and the first and the second world war laid many more old and beautiful houses in ruins. The last disaster was the flood catastrophe in 1962 with 315 dead and damage of about 1 billion Deutsch Marks. The most recent history of the city is distinguished by the rapid reconstruction after theéGreat fireé and the second World War. The large number of Hamburg colleges, the many cultural events, the high-speed subway network as well as the great engineering constructions show that Hamburg is still continuing to develop.

Judith Mentzel 16

(***)

The Hamburg harbour

The Hamburg harbour has a total area of 87 km². It has 60 docks and 500 berths. The harbour has a storage capacity of 5 millions km². It is one of the most important container-harbours of the world. About 15 000 vessels unload and load 60 millions metric tons of goods.

What would the harbour be without the Reeperbahn; this world-famous entertainment area has something to cater for all tastes. The spectrum includes striptease clubs and pubs, night clubs and discos. There are also alleys and billard halls, theatres, cinemas, curiosity shops and the 'Panoptikum', a waxwork exhibition housing all kinds of 'celebrities' on three floors.

Lars Rohlf 10f

Angela Schacht 10d

Marc Witt 10f (...)"

Appendix I

Icelandic Feast Days

"#2 15-MAR-1990 17:53:38.40 From: IN%"tokiÉkopasker.IS"
To: tellaÉcc.Helsinki.FI (...)

Jan. 1: New Year Day	Official flag-raising
Feb. 28: Ash Wednesday	
Apr. 13: Long Friday	Official flag-raising
Apr. 15: Easter Sunday	Official flag-raising
Apr. 15: The President's birthday	Official flag-raising
Apr. 16: Easter Monday	
Apr. 19: First Day of Summer	Official flag-raising
May 1: The First of May (Labour Day)	Official flag-raising
May 19: Ascension Day	
Jun. 2: Saturday before Whitsunday	Official flag-raising
Jun. 3: Whitsun(tide) (Pentecost)	Official flag-raising
Jun. 17: The National Day	Official flag-raising
Aug. 6: Holiday of Shop Assistants and Office People	
Dec. 1: Independence Day	Official flag-raising
Dec. 25: Christmas Day	Official flag-raising
Dec. 26: Boxing Day; the day after Christmas Day	

As you can see, most of these days are the same as in Finland, but some of them are not. Our Ash Wednesday is equivalent to the first Monday in the Long Fast in Denmark. Then the cat is 'beaten out of the barrel' in Denmark, and we imported that tradition, but on Ash Wednesday. In Akureyri, where the tradition is at its best, they usually shoot a raven and put it in the barrel. Then the beating begins, and the one that gives the barrel the blow that breaks it is 'The King of The Cat'. Kids dress in funny costumes, sing in the shops and get candies.

The First Day of Summer is special for Iceland, I think. This day is the first day in the spring month 'Harpa', and in the old days it was said, that the 'warming stone' had been put in the earth. The farmers and their wives used to give their workers and kids 'summer-presents'. This tradition is hardly any longer, and, I am sad to say, not the first one we lose.

The Holiday of Shop Assistants and Office People always falls on the first Monday of August. This day has gradually become a holiday of almost everybody but shop- and office people. The shops must be open so that people on holiday can buy what they want! This week-end is now nothing but a nightmare in our country: Thousands of cars on our narrow roads and young people gather in certain places with very poor accommodation, and drink heavily.

Best regards for now, Th. Jonsson. (...)"

"2 IN%"tokiÉkopasker.IS 16-FEB-1990
To: tellaÉcc.Helsinki.FI (...)

In addition to what I told Seppo about our feast-days I would like to mention two special days: The Husband Day and The Wife Day. Do you have something like these days.

According to the old Icelandic calendar, every month always began on the same day of the week. The months did not bear the Roman names we now use, but real Icelandic names. (So the week-days, too, but the Church did not like the old, heathen names, and the bishop renamed the days of the week. The first winter-month, 'gormanudur', started on a Saturday, Oct. 21—27. That day was named 'The First Day of Winter' (Fyrsti vetrardagur). The first month of summer, 'harpa' began on the first Thursday after April 18. This is our 'First Day of Summer, an official flag-raising day, and, I think, a special Icelandic feast-day.

The 4. month of winter began on a Friday, Jan. 19—25. This day was (and still is) Husband Day. This day the wife is supposed to take extra good care of her husband :-) and, the husband was supposed to get outside, having nothing on but one leg in his long underpants, and walk three times around the house! (Of course this was in the country, 'farmer-culture'. Could you really imagine every husband in Toronto and Helsinki hopping naked around his house early in the morning, with one leg in long underpants? Please try :-) !!

The 5. month of winter begins on a Sunday, Feb. 18—24. Then the husband must take extra care of his wife: bring her breakfast in bed and perhaps a red rose or a bunch of flowers. Then he must cook the food and wash the dishes. (I really do not think you should show this letter to any woman in your country).

Before, I mentioned the names of the week-days. Here are the old, Icelandic names.

Modern Icel.	Meaning	Old Icel.	Meaning
Sunnudagur	'Day of the sun'	Sunnudagur	Same as modern Icel.
Manudagur	'Day of the moon'	Manadagur	Same as modern Icel.
Þriðjudagur	'The third day'	Tysdagur	'The day of Tyr' (a god)
Midvikudagur	'The day in the middle of the week'	Odinsdagur	'The day of Odin' (a god)
Fimmtudagur	'The fifth day'	Þorsdagur	'The day of Thor' (a god)
Fostudagur	'Fasting day'	Freysdagur	'The day of Freyr' (a god)
Laugardagur	'Bathing day'	Þvottadagur	'Washing day'

As you can see, all the old Icelandic names but one are the same as in English. Only 'Washing Day' English has imported from the Roman mythology. Best wishes for now, Thorir Jonsson"

Appendix J Japanese Feast Days

"To: [Global Village schools]
From: KDD045 Delivered: Mon 26-Feb-90 9:54 Sys 10001 (49)
Subject: NATIONAL HOLIDAYS IN JAPAN

Dear friends,

In one of the messages sent by Seppo, there was a topic of national holidays. So I'll tell you Japanese national holidays.

- Jan. 1 New Year's Day (Shougatsu)
(Usually we have six-day-holidays from 29 of Dec to 3 of Jan in the public bureaus.)
- Jan. 15 Coming-of-Age-Day (Seijin-no-hi, where 'seijin' means 'grown-ups', 'no' is a particle meaning 'of' and 'hi' is 'day')
- Feb. 11 National Founding Day (Kenkoku-kinembi, 'kenkoku' for national founding 'kinembi' for a memorial day)
- March.3 Vernal Equinox Day (Shumbun-no-hi, shumbun literally meaning the division for spring)
- April 29 Green preserving Day (Midori-no-hi, 'midori' meaning 'green')
- May 3 Consitution Memorial Day (Kempo-kinembi, 'kempo' meaning 'consitution')
- May 4 National Holiday (This is legislated as a new national holiday, as the 4th of May was between the national holidays and Japanese worked too hard and had less holidays.)
- May 5 Children's Day or Boy's Festival (Kodomo-no-him 'kodomo' being children)
- Sep. 15 Respect-for-the-Aged-Day (Keiro-no-hi, 'keiro' meaning 'respecting for the senior')
- Sep. 23 Autumnal Equinox Day (Shubun-no-hi, again 'shubun' literally meaning devision of autumn)
- Oct. 10 health-Sports Day (Taiiku-no-hi, 'taiiku' referring to the build-up of our body)
- Nov. 3 Culture Day (Bunka-no-hi, 'bunkka' being culture)
- Nov. 23 Labor Thanksgiving day (Kinrou-kansha-no-hi, 'kinro' meaning hard labor and 'kansha' for thanksgiving)
- Dec. 23 The Emperor's Birthday (Tennno-tanjoubi; the emperor is the counter-word for 'tenno' and 'tanjoubi' is birthday.)

I hope my translation is understandable. If there is some misleading vocabulary would you be kind enough to let me know it.

Best wishes, Noriko"

Appendix K

US and Canadian Poems

"#1 15-MAY-1990 07:47:21.82 NEWMAIL
 From: IN%"SCHWAEGERLE"vms.macc.wisc.edu" "MICHAEL
 SCHWAEGERL"
 To: TELLA@cc.Helsinki.FI
 Subj: Letters from Wisconsin (...)

'Station Seven Hoedown', an original composition

Twinkie, Twinkie,	A hit—strike up the band!
Little treat	Rick is laughing
Almost gone	Red of face
But for it's neat	Joe is hitting
Filling.	Me in the face
Creamy filling	Ow.
By the trough	Close the screen door
But now on ruler.	Down we go
Cough! Cough! Cough!	Hanson's a geezer so
Twinkie on ruler	let's have a hoe
And ruler in hand	Down. (...)
Joe's hair is the target	

*** Poems and Creative Writing ***

Forest Sanctuary

It is cloudy and dreary in the sky above. down below the calm stream trickles, as gently as maple syrup flowing on hot pancakes on sunday morning. sand and dark dirt collect on the stream bottom. the ground is overrun with hard tree stumps, while trees shaken down by the howling wind lie dead. twigs as thin as old-fashioned straws are piled everywhere. soggy leaves are trapped in the mud like quicksand. ants wriggle around on the rough bark. an occasional call from a crow breaks the silence. the sun peeks through. the light reflects off the stream, making it glimmer like a fine diamond. more birds join into the chorus. vigorous and vivacious, the forest is rekindled. until night falls, creating a blanket of darkness which will last for hours, before the sanctuary will be renewed again.

by Wilson Tai

Southern Drawl
 Dust began to pile
 Mildew began to form on the house
 No one had come
 Not even the squirrels
 Papers and empty bottles strewn about
 Signifying the waste and decay
 An ending of a dream
 Beaten and battered

Drifting into the misty forest
There was still a small glimpse of hope
You can't fight loneliness
You can't fight isolation
Soon it will be over
And death is just the force
That scatters loneliness into nothingness
by Kevin St. John

Odd people,
destined for a strange wedding.
Eloped.
'I now pronounce you guy and gal.'
And they were wed.
In each suitcase a complete life.
Not going to go back.

Voyaging northwest, Washington state,
oceanic peace pressing against ruptured cliffs,
water defeated, marriage doomed.

Exactly three minutes time
for the breakfast ritual,
toast, pineapple juice.

Bed already made,
breakfast dishes piled up.
Dirty dishesQwash them first, dry them off,
stack them in the cupboard.
Dust furniture, vacuum rugs, wash floors.

Precisely at twelve thirty daily
out of the used, brown paper bag
a cold, cheddar cheese sandwich.

Lunch dishes, dirty dishes Q
wash them first, dry them off,
stack them in the cupboard.
Dust furniture, vacuum rugs, wash floors.

Six chimes, dinner time Q
a steaming platter and a newspaper
adorn the table.
A fork scrapes against his teeth,
no words escape his mouth.

Dinner dishes, dirty dishes Q
wash them first, dry them off,
stack them in the cupboard.
Dust the socks, mend the holes,
sew on the missing buttons.

Eight thirty, time for repose.
 Lights out, silence looms.
 Conversing non-existent.

Oceanic peace pressing against ruptured cliffs,
 water defeated, marriage doomed.
 by Heather Stevens

Marriage
 Century turning, D.C. flipping,
 society going whacko.
 1999 A.D. Q crazy drugs, hallucinations
 busted.

Her head of straight, white, blond hair
 shielded her creativity behind
 large, deep-set blue eyes.

Tall, lanky,
 muscular, and pale-skinned,
 light brown, thin hair outlining
 angular facial features:
 A young, old character
 set in his old-fashioned ways."

"#5 10-DEC-1989 14:11:16.11 NEWMAIL
 From: IN%"USERNBSF@SFU.BITNET" "Trevor Owen"
 To: TELLA@cc.Helsinki.FI (...)

Seasons in Toronto

Fluffy flakes flying freely,
 Children tobogganing down the hills.
 Slowly, everything will be covered in white,
 Winter, what a beautiful sight.

Bees buzzing busily near the buds,
 Waiting for flowers to blossom.
 Fresh green grass sprouts from the ground,
 Without making a sound.

Boats sailing along the vast ocean,
 Children swimming joyfully.
 Others are having all kinds of fun,
 Despite the hot weather caused by the sun.

Beautiful colours appear before your eyes,
 Red, brown, yellow, and orange.
 Rains come and go unsteadily,
 Next thing you know, the leaves begin to fall gently.

Janice Cho 13C
 Mr.Owen & Mrs. Ancans
 Writer's Craft, Period eight"

"#6 10-DEC-1989 14:13:47.04 NEWMAIL
From: IN%"USERNBSP@SFU.BITNET" "Trevor Owen"
To: TELLA@cc.Helsinki.FI
Subj: RE: Greetings (...)

UXBRIDGE

My city isn't to you.
It's a hick-town.
Or a green sign on the highway,
Or, more likely, a dot on the map that you never bothered to notice.
My city isn't to them.
To them, it's where they can get their cows,
Or where they can get their wheat,
Or where they can grow their crops.

My city is the house.
The one with the big, green-shingled roof,
And the swing on the big white porch,
And the garage where dad put my orange and green tricycle.

My city is the neighbourhood.
It's the one with the road I wasn't allowed to cross,
And the doctor that made things hurt down the street,
And the supermarket that was an uphill trek around the corner.

My city is the restaurant.
The one with the gravel parking lot,
And the huge, ugly swordfish hanging on the wall,
And the colourful plastic arrows in the glass on the bar.

My city is the rides in the countryside.
It's where the hills roll up,
Where fields of wheat wave,
Where the view is unbroken.

My city is Christmas,
When we had a gigantic family reunion,
And enjoyed the scent of a popcorned and cranberried evergreen,
And the whiteness of the countryside.

My city is where I was born.
It's not where I got to grow up,
But it's where I learned to love the country
And where I had my first tastes of life.
By Grace Law, grade 13, Riverdale C.I. Toronto, Canada."

Appendix L

English Recipes

To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: YSO007 Delivered: Tue 21-Nov-89 20:01 Sys 10001 (130) (...)

THE TEENAGERS OF ENGLAND EAT HAMBURGERS, CHIPS, SALADS, BREAD AND BUTTER, BAKED BEANS ON TOAST, VEGETABLES, MEATS LIKE PORK, BEEF, LAMB, CHICKEN, STEAK AND SAUSAGES. WE ALSO EAT A LOT OF THINGS THAT ARE BAD FOR US LIKE CRISPS, CHOCOLATE AND OTHER SWEETS.

BELOW ARE SOME TRADITIONAL ENGLISH RECIPES.

PANCAKES:

INGREDIENTS

CASTER SUGAR

4OZ (100grams) PLAIN FLOUR

GOOD PINCH OF SALT

1 EGG

1/2 PINT (300ml) MILK AND WATER MIXED HALF AND HALF

1 TABLESPOON OF VEGETABLE OR CORN OIL

OIL FOR FRYING

1 LEMON

HOW TO MAKE THE PANCAKES

SPRINKLE A LITTLE CASTER SUGAR ONTO A SHEET OF GREASEPROOF PAPER AND PUT ON ONE SIDE.

MEASURE THE FLOUR AND SALT INTO A MIXING BOWL AND MAKE A WELL IN THE CENTRE.

ADD THE EGG AND GRADUALLY STIR IN HALF THE MILK AND WATER.

USING A WHISK, BLEND IN THE FLOUR FROM THE SIDES OF THE BOWL.

BEAT WELL UNTIL SMOOTH.

STIR IN THE REMAINING LIQUID AND OIL.

HEAT AN 8 INCH (20 cm) FRYING PAN AND A LITTLE OIL.

WHEN IT IS HOT POUR OFF ANY EXCESS AND SPOON ABOUT TWO TABLESPOONS OF THE BATTER INTO THE PAN.

TIP AND ROTATE THE PAN SO THAT THE BATTER SPREADS OUT EVENLY AND THINLY AND COVERS THE BASE.

COOK THE PANCAKES FOR ABOUT ONE MINUTE UNTIL PALE BROWN UNDERNEATH.

TURN OVER WITH A PALETTE KNIFE, OR WOODEN SPATULA IF USING A NON STICK PAN, OR TOSS.

THEN COOK FOR ANOTHER MINUTE UNTIL PALE GOLDEN BROWN.

INVERT THE PANCAKE ONTO THE SUGARED PAPER AND ROLL UP.

PLACE ON A HOT SERVING DISH AND PUT THIS OVER A STEAMING PAN TO KEEP WARM WHILE YOU MAKE THE REMAINING PANCAKES.

SERVE WITH LEMON WEDGES.

MAKES 8—10 PANCAKES.

WHAT SORT OF THINGS DO YOU EAT AT CHRISTMAS? (...)
class 4MT, 21/11/89"

"To: TBX850 (12762:TBX850)

From: YSO007 Delivered: Mon 27-Nov-89 20:19 Sys 10001 (194)

Subject: message to [Teacher A] 2 (...)

Food page

WHAT SORT OF THINGS DO YOU EAT AT CHRISTMAS? IN ENGLAND WE EAT ROAST TURKEY, ROAST POTATOES, BRUSSEL SPROUTS, CARROTS, RUNNER BEANS, BACON ROLLS, MINI-SAUSAGES AND STUFFING, THEN FOR PUDDING WE EAT EITHER CHRISTMAS PUDDING OR CHRISTMAS CAKE.

HERE ARE A COUPLE MORE TYPICAL ENGLISH RECIPES.

CREAM OF CELERY SOUP

INGREDIENTS

1oz BUTTER

1 HEAD OF CELERY SCRUBBED AND CHOPPED

1oz (1/4 CUP) FLOUR

1 PINT (2 1/2 CUPS) CHICKEN STOCK

1 BLADE OF MACE

1 TEASPOON LEMON JUICE

SALT AND FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER

2oz CARROTS, PEELED AND FINELY DICED

1/2 PINT (1 1/4 CUPS) MILK (...)

CHRISTMAS PUDDING

INGREDIENTS

2oz (50grams) SELF RAISING FLOUR

GOOD PINCH MIXED SPICED

GOOD PINCH GRATED NUTMEG

4oz(100 grams)CURRENTS

4oz(100 grams)SULTANAS

4oz(100 grams)STONED RAISINS

3oz(75 grams)FRESH WHITE BREADCRUMBS

3oz(75 grams)SHREDDED SUET

1oz(25 grams)CHOPPED MIXED PEEL

1oz(25 grams)ALMONDS,BLANCHED

1 SMALL COOKING APPLE

1 ROUNDED TABLESPOON MARMALADE

3oz(75 grams)GRATED CARROT

4oz(100 grams)SOFT BROWN SUGAR

2 EGGS BEATEN (...)"

Appendix M

An Introduction to the Winter War

"To: TELLA.SEPPO (TBX850)

From: Teacher C1 Delivered: Sun 18-Mar-90 12:02 Sys 12762 (5) (...)

In the last few months Finnish people have commemorated the 50th anniversary of a short but crucial period in their history, the Winter War in 1939—40. In that war Finns, a small nation of only 4 million people, had to fight against a superpower, the Soviet Union, practically alone. Finland lost the war. It had to make large territorial concessions to the Soviet Union, but it remained independent and the war meant strengthening the national unity among the Finns, who had been a divided nation after the bitter civil war in 1918 between the Reds (socialists) and the Whites (who won the war). (...)

Here is a short description of the war, based on a text by a Finnish historian, Professor Matti Klinge, in the booklet '60 years independent Finland' (1977). Behind the Winter War lay the Soviet Union's century-old fear for the safety of Leningrad and her link with the Baltic Sea. German rearmament made the question of the reliability of Finnish neutrality topical. The Soviet Union was afraid that Finland would be used as a basis for attack, and proposed some exchanges of territory. The Finnish government refused to give in to the Soviet demands. It feared that it would suffer the same fate as the Baltic States. (That means Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia, which had been invaded by the Soviets.) Arguing that the Soviet Union ought to have confidence in Finland's desire for peace and neutrality, the Finnish government regarded the conflict rather a matter of international justice than of Russian security policy. Mr Mannerheim (the commander of the Finnish Army during the war) and Mr Paasikivi (a famous politician, later the president of Finland) urged acquiescence—but in vain. They understood the need to ensure Leningrad's safety and knew that the Finnish army could not offer defence for long against the over-whelming power of the USSR.

The Finnish government for its part was convinced that Finland's genuine desire to remain neutral would be understood, and calculated that the Soviet would not finally go as far as to war. They also feared who could guarantee that there would be no new demands if Finland ceded then. War broke out in November 1939. The Finns' first defensive victories over the troops of the attacking great power in several parts of the frontier line had an important impact on public opinion both at home and abroad. As a result, the Finns' will to maintain their national independence was strengthened.

The war ended three months later with territorial concessions, but Finland remained independent and won considerable goodwill in the outside world. As there was no other spectacular fighting at the time, the Finnish Winter War held the centre of world attention. Warfare in such harsh winter conditions was also something new, and here the Finns did better than the enemy. However, loss of life was considerable."

Appendix N

The Finnish Initial Teacher Education System

To: School C

From: TBX850 Delivered: Tue 13-Mar-90 20:18 Sys 12762 () (...)

The present system of pre-service or initial teacher education in Finland goes back to the year 1974 when it was decided that teacher education should be given by the universities so that both primary school and secondary school teachers would take university degrees (Master of Education, similar to Master of Arts).

Administratively, the Departments of Teacher Education, with their own teacher training schools, are submitted to the Faculties of Education. What perhaps makes the Finnish system unique is the way how teacher education is coordinated and integrated with other university degree studies: The would-be teachers' educational studies and teacher training take place alongside their other academic (subject) studies before they take a university degree. Study periods with concentration on subject studies may be followed by periods of more intensive educational studies or periods of teacher training. The basic idea of this integration is to make teacher education more efficient and systematic by combining theory with practice, and to make better and more economic use of the teaching resources in universities.

How does the Finnish system of pre-service teacher education work in practice? Primarily, students have to apply for teacher education, normally at the end of their second year of university studies. They are selected by a selection committee of experienced teacher trainers and university teachers after an entrance examination, which is an aptitude test consisting of a 15-minute-long interview and a structuring and referring task based on written material. Teacher education for the would-be teachers of English, taking 40 study weeks in all, includes general education (12 study weeks), methodology of language teaching (9 study weeks), teacher training (18 study weeks) and optional studies (1 study week). There are slight variations between different Finnish universities, but the sequence of studies at the University of Helsinki is the following:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1st year | • general education (12 study weeks) |
| 2nd year | • methodology of language teaching (5 study weeks) |
| (autumn term) | • optional studies (1 study week) |
| | • 1st basic training (3 study weeks) |
| | • 2nd basic training (5 study weeks) |
| 3rd year | • methodology of language teaching (4 study weeks) |
| (spring term) | • final training (7 study weeks) |

The students usually start their educational studies at the beginning of their 3rd academic year. They continue their language studies in the respective language departments at the same time, but when they are doing practice training, they'll have to slow down their other university studies. Graduation takes about six years—or even more.

General education consists of lectures given by the assistant professor and the lecturers in methodology, and of studying educational literature. Methodology of language teaching consists of lectures, seminars and workshops guided by the assistant professor and/or the lecturers. Teacher trainees also have to write seminar papers and do some educational research on language teaching. The first basic training stage consists of lectures and micro-teaching and other small-group practice (classroom observation and lesson analysis, for instance). This stage is generally run by the lecturers in methodology. At the same time, teacher trainees attend tutorials with training school teachers.

During the 2nd basic training stage teacher trainees give practice lessons (12–16); they have to observe 40 lessons, and they attend tutorials animated by the training school teachers and (less frequently) by the lecturers in FL methodology. The Department of Teacher Education organises lectures, methodological seminars and workshops which are part of the compulsory syllabus of the teacher trainees. In addition, teacher trainees have a chance of taking part in optional courses (video; computer-based applications; suggestopaedia, etc.).

In January, the teacher trainees who have not experience in teaching look after one or two classes in a so-called field school (= an ordinary school) for one month (30 practice lessons). This gives them a chance to experiment on different teaching practices and try out their own ideas. They usually assume all responsibility for the class(es) they teach, which also includes evaluation and possible mark-giving. Senior teachers of the field schools do help if appropriate.

During the final training stage, which lasts some three months, the teacher trainees give 14–18 practice lessons, observe classes and continue to attend tutorials, seminars, and different courses at the Department of Teacher Education. Most FL teachers will teach two modern languages in schools so they also have to train in two subjects. (Exotic combinations, such as English and home economics, are allowed, although they have not been very popular so far. The teacher trainer can also select a combination of Latin and Spanish, for instance, though his or her professional prospects will not be too good in that case.)

After the final stage, the teacher trainees will get a Certificate of Teacher Education, with marks for teacher training (grades 1–5, five being excellent), general education (grades 1–3, three standing for excellent), and foreign language methodology (grades 1–3, three standing for excellent). The Certificate of Teacher Education is rather important when the new teachers apply for their first teaching posts. The teacher trainees are rather conscious of this (regrettable) fact, which causes some stress during the final stage.

So far it has also been possible to apply for teacher education courses after taking a university degree. This is called a 'separate teacher education system', which also lasts one year, and is similar to the system described above in terms of study weeks and its contents. Only a minority of students become teachers this way and the relative number of 'old-style' teacher trainees is dwindling all the time.

A few comments from the teacher trainers' viewpoint:

● What looks good and applicable on paper may turn out to be difficult to carry out in practice. So far, the experience of the system has shown that there is not enough coordination between the Language Departments and the Department of Education. This results in a situation where the student is expected to be in two places at the same time. Most of the courses and seminars at the Language Departments require compulsory attendance; at the Department of Teacher Education, attendance in some courses can be replaced by examinations. A principle of lenience has been increasingly adopted at both ends: a certain number of lessons can be missed or replaced otherwise if the priority of the other requires it. Despite these lenient and understanding arrangements there is still a certain amount of stress and frustration among the teacher trainees, unfortunately. The schedule for the whole course of teacher education seems to be rather tight, although there have been slight attempts to alleviate the work load.

● There are also problems of coordination between the Department of Teacher Education and the two training schools, mostly about timetables but also about the contents of training. There is a danger of too much overlap in what is taught, which of course is frustrating and demotivating to both trainees and trainers. Some aspects might also be somewhat neglected on the assumption that the others will deal with them. A lot of exchange of information and mutual agreements are needed to sort out these problems, and we are glad to say there has been some success within the Faculty of Education.

● Because the teacher trainees start practice training before finishing their language studies, their language proficiency is sometimes insufficient for teaching purposes at senior secondary school level in particular. This problem becomes less grave as they make progress in their respective language studies.

● A definite advantage of the system is the fact that students know what is awaiting them after their professional studies: training, i.e., giving lessons, alongside their academic language studies will give them a fairly realistic picture of their future profession. In our opinion, the objective of combining theory with practice has been fairly well achieved in our teacher education system. (The teacher trainees used to criticise the system for focusing too much on general education, but this has changed radically during the past few years).

● The selection system ensures the fact that only people with characteristics suitable for the teaching profession enter teaching education.

● Our students seem to be quite well-motivated and determined to become teachers. Students have not landed on teaching after academic studies earlier either, but now they will have to apply for teacher education at an earlier stage, and this seems to have a positive impact on their attitudes towards teacher education and teaching as a career. In their modern language studies they can also increasingly focus on things that will help them as teachers.

[Teachers C1 and C2, and I] (...)"

Appendix O

Mail Icons

"Helsinki, 1990-01-07

To: [Teachers A, B, C1, and C2]

Dear Friends,

Heard of Mail Icons? Well—there's a package coming to you, to be used whenever needed. (...)

:-) Smiling
 :-(Frowning
 ^-) Wink
 :-> Sardonic incredulity
 %-) Drunk with laughter
 :-" Pursing lips
 :-O Wow!
 :- Grim
 :-= Baboon
 :-v Speaking
 :-V Shouting
 :-W Speak with forked tongue
 :-r Sticking tongue out
 :-* Oops! (covering mouth with hand)
 :-T Keeping a straight face (tight-lipped)
 :-D Said with a smile
 :-x Kiss
 :-c Real unhappy
 :-C Just totally unbelieving! (Jaw dropped)
 :-B Drooling, driveling
 :-, Smirk, grin
 :- Anger
 :-\$ Uncertainty
 :-# Mouth zipped
 :-& Tangled up tongue
 :-@ Swearing

With best wishes (and)

<^_^>

<^-*>

Seppo (...)"

Appendix P**Test Your Senses and Some Rules of Thumb**

"To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2

Subject: 2nd letter from Seppo, Jan. 24th (...)

Try to determine what the words mean...

For example, the answer for No 1 is ****sandbox****. (...)

1.

SAND

2.

MAN
BOARD

3.

STAND
I

4.

R/E/A/D/I/N/G

5.

WEAR
LONG

6.

R
ROADS
A
D
S

7.

T
O
W
N

8.

O
M.D.
Ph.D.
B.S. (...) "¹

¹ Answers: 2 man overboard; 3 I understand; 4 reading between the lines; 5 long underwear; 6 Crossroads; 7 Downtown; 8 Three degrees below zero.

"Helsinki, 1990-01-07
To: Teachers A, B, C1, and C2

RULES OF THUMB

- * No sentence fragments.
- * Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.
- * Avoid commas, that are not necessary.
- * If you reread your work you will find on rereading that a great deal of repetition can be avoided by rereading and editing.
- * A writer must not shift your point of view.
- * Eschew dialect, irregardless.
- * And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
- * Don't overuse exclamation marks!!!
- * Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of 10 or more words, to their antecedents.
- * Hyphenate between syllables and avoid unnecessary hyphens.
- * Write all adverbial forms correct.
- * Don't use contractions in formal writing.
- * Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided.
- * It is incumbent on us to avoid archaisms.
- * Remember never to split an infinitive.
- * Avoid run-on sentences they are hard to read.
- * Don't use no double negatives.
- * Use the semicolon properly, always use it where it is appropriate; and never where it isn't.
- * Reserve the apostrophe for its proper use and omit it when its not needed.
- * Do not put statements in the negative form.
- * Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
- * If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is.
- * Steer clear of incorrect forms of verbs that have snuck in the language.
- * Take the bull by the hand and avoid mixed metaphors.
- * Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky.
- * Never, ever use repetitive redundancies.
- * Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in their writing.
- * If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times, resist hyperbole.
- * Also avoid awkward or affected alliteration.
- * Don't string too many prepositional phrases together unless you are walking through the valley of the shadow of death.
- * Always pick on the correct idiom.
- * "Avoid overuse of 'quotation marks.'"
- * Last but not least, avoid cliches like the plague; seek viable alternatives.

N. J. A. Sloane, Editor, Transactions on Information Theory.
Typed hopefully with no more misprints by Sepppo Tella."

Appendix Q

Australian English vs. British English

"To: School C

From: TBX850 Delivered: Wed 24-Jan-90 18:00 Sys 12762 () (...)

FROM NIXON STREET SCHOOL IN DEVONPORT

AUSTRALIAN SLANG WORDS.

vegies = vegetables.

cauli = cauliflower

hols = holidays

pics = pictures

breaky = breakfast.

consci = conscientious

barbie = barbecue.

Tassie = Tasmania.

pressy = present.

lippy = lipstick.

footy = football

chewy = chewing gum.

choccy = chocolate.

roo = kangaroo

cuppa = cup of tea.

blowie = blowfly

Some of our slang is imported and some of it is of our own making.

spuds = potatoes

G'day = contraction of good day. (may be sloppy speech!!!!!!)

cobber = friend

bonzer = good

go crook = to show anger.

scungy = dirty and untidy.

fair dinkum = a true fact

dinkydi = sincere, true.

drongo = a fool.

a blue = an argument.

battler = one who struggles for livelihood.

bottler = someone outstanding in his class

bung it on = put on 'side.'

bushwacker = someone lacking in social graces.

within cooe = in easy reach.

dobber = one who informs against.

grog = any alcohol

ENGLISH

PAVEMENT

COURGETTE

AUBERGINE

TWO RIDING ON A BICYCLE

OFF LICENCE

RUBBISH

TROUSERS

VEST

FLIP FLOPS

FLIMSOLES-PUMPS

MOTORWAY

A-ROAD

PEPPERS

HOT PEPPERS

AUSTRALIAN

FOOTPATH

ZUCCHINI

EGGPLANT

DINKING

BOTTLE SHOP

GARBAGE

PANTS

SINGLET

THONGS

SANDSHOES

FREEWAY

HIGHWAY

CAPISCUM

PEPPERS

AUSTRALIAN WORDS FROM RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL,
LAUNCESTON Regards Sandra Beck

<i>English/Australian</i>	back garden/yard
crisp/chip	waisty coat/vest
pick up/ute	forest/bush
lorry/truck	meadow/paddock
squash/cordial	aye/yes
sweets/lollies	wellingtons/gumboots
ice lolly/icy pole	continental quilt/doona
bungalow/house	printing shop/ printery
estate car/station wagon	rice crispy/rice bubbles
dual carraigeway/highway	plimsoles/sneakers
tea break/smoko	sweaters/jumpers

English Words from Swinnerton Nuneaton School in Warwickshire

YEAH = Yes
SHUT IT = Be quiet
ARE = Are you OK ?
DOG AND BONE = Telephone
JOE BAXI = Taxi
APPLE AND PEARS = Stairs (...)
DRIVE HIM UP THE WALL = Make him angry or insane
CUT = Share (noun)
SPUDS = Potatoes
MOGGY = Cat
MUT = Dog
NICK = Steal (...)
DRIVE HIM ROUND THE BEND = Send him angry/mad (...)
UP THE WOODEN HILL = Up the stairs
UP THE WOODEN HILL TO BEDFORDSHIRE = Up the stairs to bed
PUT THE WOOD IN THE HOLE = To shut the door
I'VE PUT MY FOOT IN IT = I've made a mistake (...)
SKIVE = To not show up to an event you are supposed to go to (like school)
BACK OFF or PUSH OFF = Go away
PLATES OF MEAT = Feet (...)
BROWNE OFF = Annoyed or Frustrated
SEE YOU = Bye Bye
UP THE WALL = Angry/Insane
SCUM = Rubbish (usually referring to people)
ZIP IT = Be quiet
PRUNE SNAPPY = either Fast/Quick or Smart (asin clothes)
SCRAP = Throw away (verb)
SPILT THE BEANS = Told a secret
LET THE CAT OUT THE BAG = Told a secret
GLOAT UP THE SPOUT = In trouble (...)"

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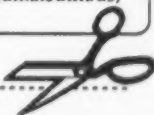
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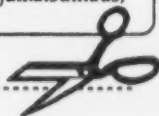
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